



3 1761 04399 5638









THE LETTERS  
OF JOHN HUS



# THE LETTERS OF JOHN HUS.

WITH INTRO-  
DUCTIONS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

*by* **Herbert B. Workman, M.A.**

Principal of Westminster Training College, Author  
of "The Age of Wyclif" and "The Age of Hus"

*and* **R. Martin Pope, M.A.**

LONDON: **HODDER**

**AND STOUGHTON, 27**

PATERNOSTER ROW 1904



BX  
4917  
A4  
1904

*"Veritas semper vincit, cum hæc sit ipsius proprietas  
et natura, ut, quo magis obscuratur, eo magis  
illucescit, et quo magis deprimitur, eo magis elevatur"*

DOCUMENTA, p. 39, INFRA, p. 95

*"Scio, quod vincit qui occiditur"*

DOCUMENTA, p. 62, INFRA, p. 133



## PREFACE

THE translation of *The Letters of Hus* in the present volume, though both authors are jointly responsible for the form in which it is now presented, is almost wholly the work of Mr. Pope. The Life, Introductions, Collation of Texts, Chronological Arrangement, and Notes have been contributed by Mr. Workman, who is solely responsible for this portion of the book.

*The Letters of Hus* have never yet been adequately translated into English. The only extant translation is one by Mackenzie, published in Edinburgh in 1846. This is a rendering, not of the original, but of the French of Bonnechose's edition of the *Letters*. Unfortunately Bonnechose's work is based upon the very imperfect edition of 1558—*Historia et Monumenta J. Hus et Hieron. Pragensis* (also with different pagination and some additional matter, 1715).<sup>1</sup> No translation has hitherto been attempted from the text

<sup>1</sup> This is the edition usually cited by us in the notes and elsewhere as *Mon.* or *Monumenta*. We give always the pagination of the 1558 edition, which will also be found in the margin of the 1715 edition. The text of the *Monumenta* is that used by all historians, including Neander, before Palacký. As the *Monumenta* incorporates the whole of the *Epistolæ Piissimæ* (*infra*, p. 2), we have not thought it needful to give the readings of this earlier and less complete edition.



of Palacký, which is not only more complete but also has the merit of presenting the letters in their approximate chronological arrangement. In Bonnechose's collection, where the order of the edition he used is strictly followed, early letters often come at the end, and the letters of the two captivities are sadly confused. Sometimes also simple expressions have proved a stumbling-block to Bonnechose, *e.g.*, the word *stubam* (*infra*, p. 152). The Czech of his edition (Nuremberg, 1558), which is, so to speak, the Czech of Frankfort-atte-Bowe, is left severely alone; for no Palacký had as yet made it intelligible. An instance will be found on p. 206.

The text we have chiefly followed is the great edition of Palacký (*Documenta Mag. Joannis Hus, vitam, doctrinam, causam in Constantiensi Concilio actam illustrantia* Ed. Fr. Palacký: *Regni Bohemice Historiographus*, Prague, 1869)—usually cited by us in our notes as *Doc.*, or, where questions of text are concerned, as *P.* The readings, however, that are to be found in Höfler's *Geschichtschreiber der husitischen Bewegung in Böhmen* (in the "Fontes rerum Austriacarum," Vienna, 1865, 3 vols.)—cited as Höfler or H.—seem to us in some cases to be preferable. The two editions have been collated—so far, that is, as readings are concerned which would make an essential difference in translation. A few of these differences, as also a few of the readings of the *Monumenta*, are indicated in the notes. In spite of the severe criticism to which Palacký subjected the

*Geschichtschreiber* in his *Geschichte des Hussitenthums* (1869), Höfler's text is one of considerable value, and contains many letters that had not previously been published. For the translation of the few Czech letters, we have depended entirely on J. Kvičala's Latin rendering in Palacký, carefully compared with Höfler's German translation in the *Geschichtschreiber*.

*The Letters of Hus* present not a few difficulties to the translator. First of all, there is the nervousness, terseness, and rapidity of his style, especially in the letters of the Trial. Allusions which would be plain to his correspondents have often, by the lapse of time, become obscure. In such cases it is not easy to give a rendering which is intelligible, or which escapes the tendency to a loose paraphrase. In certain other cases Hus deliberately wrote obscurely in order to escape the consequences of the capture of his correspondence. Another difficulty, apart from the occasional corruptness of the text, arises from his Latinity. It goes without saying that the style lacks classical grace and correctness<sup>1</sup> and, as compared with the earlier mediæval writers such as Anselm or John of Salisbury, or such later curialists as Dietrich of Niem, it is full of pitfalls for the unwary. In our judgment, the Latin of Wyclif is the Latin of one who had ceased to think in that language; the Latin of Hus, though apparently more

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, the use of *se* and *sibi*, the conjunctions *quia* and *et* (conjunctive and disjunctive), are a source of much perplexity to those unfamiliar with the Latinity of the later Middle Ages. For the Latin of Wyclif, see some excellent remarks by Dr. Poole, *De Civ. Dom.*, i. xviii.-xix.

natural, is not that of a scholar, but is rather of the colloquial order, which tends to fall into a rugged and homely *patois*. There are also a few isolated words that, so far as we can discover, have escaped the notice of lexicographers. These we have indicated in the notes.

The constant quotations in the letters from the Fathers, the Vulgate, and other sources have given us no small difficulty. As regards the Vulgate, Hus differs very widely from the present Clementine-Sextine text. In the lack of data it has been impossible to decide to what extent the difference is due to a faulty memory, or to the use by Hus of manuscripts somewhat differing from the Paris recension that was the standard of his time. As a matter of fact, the quotations of Hus from the Scriptures are generally only verbally accurate in the few letters for which we must depend alone on the doctored text of the *Monumenta* or *Epistolæ Piissimæ*. In turning the Vulgate into English we have generally quoted the Douai-Rheims version.

The quotations from the Fathers have proved an even greater difficulty. Hus's knowledge of these authors was not first hand, nor will the student deem it sufficient to indicate the original source. The question must always be faced, What was the connecting link between Hus and the original? Loserth, in his valuable monograph (*Wyclif and Hus*, 1884), established the deep dependence of Hus upon the great English Reformer. We are inclined to



think that our notes will establish an equal dependence of Hus upon the great mediæval text-book, Gratian's *Decretum*,<sup>1</sup> and in some cases where Loserth held that the Bohemian was copying the Englishman, we suspect that both were copying from Gratian. The tracking out of these quotations has involved hours of labour—how many hours can only be guessed by those who have attempted a similar task themselves. In the two or three cases where our toil has been useless, we must plead the excuse of Dr. Johnson, "Ignorance, madam, sheer ignorance," urging in our defence, however, that Hus's quotations themselves are sometimes so inaccurate that even others better qualified would not be without difficulty in marking their source.

The critic will note that whereas in his notes to the *Letters* Mr. Workman gives authorities for his statements, no authorities are given for any statements in the introductions. The reason for the difference is that this is an edition of the *Letters*, not a Life of Hus. We have only sketched such portions of the life of the great Bohemian Reformer as may be needful for the elucidation of the *Letters*. For the sources of any statements as to the life of Hus, or in connection with the Council of Constance, we must refer the reader to Mr. Workman's *Age of Hus*,<sup>2</sup> and especially to the

<sup>1</sup> In our quotations in the notes we have always used the edition of Migne.

<sup>2</sup> *The Dawn of the Reformation* : vol. i., *The Age of Wyclif*; vol. ii., *The Age of Hus*.

bibliographies it contains of both ancient and modern works.

In the chronological arrangement of the *Letters* we have in the main followed Palacký. In the cases where we have differed from him we have tried to indicate our reasons. In Appendix B the student will find tables adjusting the different numbering of the letters in this translation and in Palacký, and also giving the dates according to Palacký. In some cases, as the notes will show, the data for determining the chronology of a letter are very slight, often amounting to little more than a general impression impossible to put into words, and which possibly would appeal differently to different minds.

In lieu of an index we have provided a full table of Contents, and a tolerably complete system of cross references in the notes.

This edition of the *Letters of Hus*, though we trust it may be of some service to the more serious student, is intended primarily for the general reader. Our object is to make Hus himself, the man as he lived and laboured, more real; to present a portrait of the Reformer, such as letters alone can give, painted by the subject himself. Here and there the reader may possibly feel out of touch. He may complain that there is too much of the sound of a trumpet, the voice of words, and echoes of struggles long since dead. To some extent this is true of the letters written during the



exile (Part III.). The reader approaching the study of Hus for the first time would, perhaps, do well to begin these *Letters* in the middle, with the journey to Constance (Part IV.), and read on to the final scene. We are much mistaken if, in this case, he will not receive such an interest in the author of that immortal series of letters written in prison, that he gladly turns back to the less fascinating, because more polemical, earlier portion. After all, a man's death cannot be understood apart from his life; and the remarkable picture given us of Hus in the prison of the Inquisition at Constance ought not to be isolated from the rest. Only by the study of the whole of the letters can we understand the whole man in all his strength and tenderness, and, we may add, his weakness. We are not without hopes also that this fragment of soul-history—for such the last letters of Hus undoubtedly present to us—may commend itself to some, not merely from the narrower standpoint of history, but from the larger outlook of that unity and continuity of spiritual experience throughout all ages which, under different forms and in diverse manners, is yet the manifestation and working of the one Lord and Giver of Life.

H. B. W.

R. M. P.

WESTMINSTER, *November* 1903.



# CONTENTS

PAGE

## INTRODUCTION

LUTHER'S DISCOVERY OF HUS; EDITIONS OF THE <i>Letters</i> ; THE VALUE OF THE <i>Letters</i> ; THE JUDGMENT OF OREIGHTON . . .	1-4
---	-----

## PART I

### LETTERS WRITTEN BEFORE THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP ZBINEK

EARLY LIFE OF HUS; CAREER AT THE UNIVERSITY; PREACHER AT THE BETHLEHEM; THE NEW NATIONALISM; INFLUENCE OF WYCLIF; THE FORTY-FIVE ARTICLES; REALISTS AND NOMINALISTS; HUS IS DRIFTING; HUS AND ZBINEK; EARLY FRIENDSHIP . . . . .	5-12
--	------

#### LETTER I. TO ARCHBISHOP ZBINEK

(June 30, 1408)

Hus remonstrates with Zbinek for having thrown into prison a priest named "Abraham"; Speaks strongly of the condition of the Bohemian clergy . . . . .	12-14
--	-------

#### LETTER II. TO THE NUNS OF A CERTAIN CONVENT

(September 1408)

On the value of virginity; Sends the nuns a song . . . . .	15-17
--	-------

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS; THE COUNCIL OF PISA; THE EXPULSION OF THE GERMANS; ZBINEK'S INDIGNATION WITH HUS . . . . .	17-19
--	-------

## LETTER III. TO ARCHBISHOP ZBINEK

*(December 1408)*

- Hus remonstrates with Zbinek for his treatment; He will obey the Pope in all lawful things; What he means by "neutrality"; The insults of his enemies . . . . . 19-23
- THE CLERGY COMPLAIN TO ZBINEK CONCERNING HUS; HIS INDIFFERENCE . . . . . 23

## LETTER IV. TO MASTER ZAWISSIUS

*(Autumn 1408)*

- Stop detraction in corners! You will some day be judged yourself; No right to call Hus a heretic . . . . . 24-5
- HUS RAPIDLY DRIFTS; THE BURNING OF WYCLIF'S WORKS; THE ACTION OF HUS; "BISHOP A, B, C"; MOB RULE . . . . . 25-7

## LETTER V. TO THE PEOPLE OF LAUN

*(1410)*

- Hus praises their constancy; Do not avenge yourselves; Evil priests; The great alternative; The Judge is at the gate. 28-30
- RICHARD WYCHE; HIS HISTORY; HIS LETTER TO HUS; LETTERS FROM SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE; ENGLISH SYMPATHY . . . . . 30-34

## LETTER VI. TO MASTER RICHARD [WYCHE] OF ENGLAND

*(September 1410)*

- Hus's delight with Wyche's letter; He read it in the Bethlehem; The spread of the gospel; The raging of Antichrist; Wenzel and Sophia on the side of the gospel . . . . . 34-8
- THE LATER CAREER OF WYCHE; THE TROUBLES OF HUS; CITED TO ROME; RIOT AT PRAGUE; ZBINEK AND WENZEL MAKE PEACE; LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN TO PISA AND THE POPE; FRESH DIFFICULTIES; DEATH OF ZBINEK . . . . . 38-41

# CONTENTS

XV

PAGE

## LETTER VII. TO A CERTAIN MONK

(January 18, 1411)

Poverty the rule of monks; Testimony of Gregory, Benedict,  
John Cassian, Francis, and Bernard . . . . . 42-5

## LETTER VIII. TO JOHN BARBATUS

(May 25, 1411)

"Diverse temptations"; The true nature of obedience; The  
testimony of Jerome, Augustine, Gregory, "Isidore," and  
Bede; "Therefore obey God rather than the Pope" . . . 45-50

## LETTER IX. TO JOHN XXIII.

(September 1, 1411)

Hus complains of false charges; His action as to the expulsion  
of the Germans; Why he did not appear when cited to  
Rome; Desires to be tried before the University, and will  
abide the consequences . . . . . 51-4

## LETTER X. TO THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS

(September 1411)

Hus appeals to their protection; He is innocent; Willing to  
meet a trial at Prague . . . . . 54-6

## PART II

### FROM THE DEATH OF ZBINEK TO THE EXILE OF HUS

MICHAEL THE PLEADER; HUS ATTACKS THE CLERGY AND THEIR  
VICES; TROUBLE AT PILSEN . . . . . 57-8

## LETTER XI. TO THE SUPREME COURT OF BOHEMIA

(December 1411)

The attack of Michael; The injustice of interdicts; Willing  
to be tried; Why he did not go to Rome . . . . . 58-61



## LETTER XII. TO THE PEOPLE OF PILSEN

*(March 1412)*

Dissension ; Ye did run well ; Flatterers ; Their past repute ;  
 Return ! The attack upon him in Pilsen ; " Worst priest  
 better than the best laymen " ; " Creator of God " ; Priests  
 in mortal sin must not preach ; The sons of the devil and  
 of God . . . . . 61-7

THE INDULGENCE CONTROVERSY ; WENZEL TIEM ; LUTHER AND HUS  
 COMPARED ; HUS'S OPPOSITION ; THE THEOLOGICAL FACULTY ;  
 HUS'S TRACTS AND POLEMICS ; JAGIELLO AND HIS CAREER . 67-71

## LETTER XIII. TO LADISLAUS, KING OF POLAND

*(June 10, 1412)*

Peace\*with Sigismund ; The depravity of the clergy ; Abound-  
 ing iniquity ; " Woe is me if I keep silence " . . . 71-3

STANISLAUS AND PALECZ ; QUARREL WITH HUS ; STEPHEN DOLEIN  
 AND HIS WORKS AGAINST HUS . . . . . 73-4

## LETTER XIV. TO THE MONKS OF DOLEIN

*(Summer 1412)*

The invectives of Stephen ; Do not believe him ; Hus's relation  
 to Wyclif ; Why he did not go to Rome ; An appeal to  
 Stephen not to judge Wyclif or himself . . . . . 75-7

MOB RULE AGAIN ; BURNING THE BULLS ; THE THREE MARTYRS ;  
 JOHN XXIII. AND HUS ; HUS APPEALS TO A COUNCIL ; THE  
 ATTACK ON THE BETHLEHEM ; HUS LEAVES PRAGUE . . . 77-80

LETTER XV. TO MASTERS MARTIN AND NICOLAS  
MILICZIN*(August 1412)*

Ought he to retire ? The advice of Augustine to Honoratus ;  
 Ought he to follow it ? . . . . . 80-82

CONTENTS

xvii

PAGE

PART III

LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE EXILE OF HUS

A SYNOD AT PRAGUE; HUS'S APPEAL; A NEW COMMISSION; FRUITLESS EFFORTS; THE BANISHMENT OF STANISLAUS AND PALECZ; OLD TOWN ELECTIONS; HUS IN THE COUNTRY; HIS *De Ecclesia*; VAST PREACHING LABOURS; THE NATIONAL PARTY; LETTERS OF THE EXILE. . . . . 83-8

LETTER XVI. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE

(October 1412)

The attack on the Bethlehem; The nature of abjuration . 88-9

LETTER XVII. TO THE SAME

(October 1412)

Thankfulness for their spirit; Be not afraid; Christ also suffered; His elect must therefore also suffer; The war of Christ and Antichrist; False prophets; The attack on the Bethlehem; The Goose has broken their nets; The conquest of the Truths; What fear shall part us from Christ? "I fear no death"; But I long still to preach; Christ the sufferer preserve you . . . . . 90-97

LETTER XVIII. TO THE SAME

(October 1412)

May Christ keep you free from sin; Hold fast the gospel; Ravening wolves in sheep's clothing; Rejoice in your persecution; Take heed; His labours in preaching . 97-101

LETTER XIX. TO THE SAME

(October 1412)

Do not draw back; To me to live is Christ; But I would gladly die; The attack on the Bethlehem; Christ grant us perseverance . . . . . 101-2

	PAGE
LETTER XX. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS (December 1412)	
Thoughts on Advent ; The Second Advent ; Lift up your heads	103-5
 LETTER XXI. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE (December 1412)	
The Advent is nigh ; Why Hus fled ; Why he does not return ; Woe to the priests . . . . .	105-8
 LETTER XXII. TO THE SAME (December 25, 1412)	
Rejoice for Christ is born to-day ; The meaning of the Nativity	108-10
 LETTER XXIII. TO THE SAME (January 1413)	
Faint not ; The attacks of his enemies ; The benediction of the " Bishop who is above all bishops " . . . . .	110-12
 LETTER XXIV. TO THE SAME (January 1413)	
The sufferings of Christ ; " Our Master the Peacemaker " ; " My peace I give unto you " . . . . .	112-14
 LETTER XXV. TO THE SYNOD OF PRAGUE (February 1413)	
Heretics should be pointed out, or false accusers punished ; Obedience to the Pope ; The case of Master Maurice ; Reasons why the judgment of the Theological Faculty should be rejected . . . . .	115-17

# CONTENTS

xix

PAGE

## LETTER XXVI. TO MASTER CHRISTIAN PRACHATICZ

(*Early in 1413*)

The just man cannot be sad; Hus comforts himself with this thought; Be ready for battle; The tail of Antichrist; The abomination of the Beast; An attack on John XXIII. 117-19

## LETTER XXVII. TO THE SAME

(*April 1413*)

Reasons why Hus cannot accept a compromise with Stanislaus and Palecz; Stanislaus's former views on Remanence; The incident of Stiekna; Do not change your benefice . . . 119-22

## LETTER XXVIII. TO THE SAME

(*April 1413*)

Why Hus cannot agree that the Pope is the head of the Holy Roman Church; Pope Liberius and Pope Joan; The Catholic Church is wider than the Roman Church . . . 122-8

## LETTER XXIX. TO THE SAME

(1413)

The views of Hus as to the Vicar of Christ; His claims and obedience; Popes may err; Pope Joan again . . . 128-32

## LETTER XXX. TO THE SAME

(*April 1413*)

Reviews once more his position and the general controversy with Palecz and Stanislaus . . . . . 132-4

HUS AND JEROME; THE TROUBLES OF JEROME; THE PERSECUTION  
AT VIENNA . . . . . 134

## LETTER XXXI. TO MASTER JOHN SYBART IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

(*July 1, 1413*)

Demands the reason of their persecution of Jerome; "You are badly instructed in the theology of love" . . . 135-7

LETTER XXXII. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE  
(1414)

Stand in the ways of God ; Attend the preaching ; The value  
of penitence . . . . . 137-8

PART IV

LETTERS WRITTEN ON THE JOURNEY TO  
CONSTANCE

SIGISMUND SUMMONS A COUNCIL ; SENDS FOR HUS ; HIS ESCORT ;  
HUS PREPARES TO OBEY ; HUS SENDS A NOTICE TO THE  
SYNOD OF HIS INTENTIONS ; ALSO TO THE SUPREME COURT ;  
PROCURES A CERTIFICATE OF ORTHODOXY FROM THE BISHOP  
OF NAZARETH . . . . . 139-8

LETTER XXXIII. TO SIGISMUND

(September 1, 1414)

Hus informs Sigismund of what he has done ; " Under the  
safe-conduct of your protection " Hus is not afraid of the  
Council ; His troubles when cited to Rome ; Prays for  
the King . . . . . 143-5

HUS SETS OFF WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE SAFE-CONDUCT ; SEALED  
LETTERS . . . . . 146

LETTER XXXIV. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS ON  
STARTING FOR CONSTANCE

(October 12, 1414)

His faithful labours ; Sorry he cannot come and preach once  
more ; Reasons why he has started ; His foes ; His con-  
solation in Christ and His example ; " Perhaps you will  
not see me again " ; We shall " meet in the joy of heaven " 146-9

LETTER XXXV. TO MASTER MARTIN, HIS  
DISCIPLE

(October 1414)

Converse sparingly with women ; Do not run after benefices ;  
Leave off fine clothes ; Do not follow me in my frivolity  
or love of chess ; Various legacies . . . . . 149-51

HUS AT KRAKOWEC ; HIS ESCORT TO CONSTANCE ; HIS ROUTE . 152



# CONTENTS

xxi

PAGE

## LETTER XXXVI. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(*October 20, 1414*)

Account of his journey; His reception at Nuremberg; He is much encouraged; Distributes tracts; Future plans; Gossip . . . . . 152-5

“THE DOCTOR OF BIBERACH”; SHREWD SALE OF HORSES; LODGINGS AT CONSTANCE; THE COUNCIL BEGINS; GOSSIP OF THE LETTERS; THE POPE AND THE SAFE-CONDUCT; “IF HUS HAD KILLED MY OWN BROTHER” . . . . . 155-7

## LETTER XXXVII. TO THE SAME

(*November 4, 1414*)

Gossip; Michael the Pleader again; The Pope and the safe-conduct; Prices in Constance; The cardinals and their horses; “My horse Rabstyn”; The goodness of Chlum . 157-9

## LETTER XXXVIII. TO THE SAME

(*November 6, 1414*)

Michael the Pleader; The action of the Pope; He is preparing sermons to deliver when Sigismund comes; His herald the Bishop of Lebus; They thought it was a show! Fears for his finances . . . . . 160-1

THE LIFE OF JOHN CARDINALIS; HIS LETTER ABOUT HUS; HUS WILL PREACH AND GIVE A DUCAT TO ALL PRESENT; GOSSIP CONCERNING THE COUNCIL; “THE GOOSE IS NOT YET COOKED” 162-3

## LETTER XXXIX. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS

(*November 16, 1414*)

Beware of false prophets! The Day of Judgment is at hand; Pray for me; My journey to Constance; The Sacrament has not been interrupted . . . . . 164-6

DISASTROUS RUMOURS; THE ATTEMPTED ESCAPE; THE ARREST OF HUS; MASTER DIDACO; IMPRISONED AT THE BLACKFRIARS; CHLUM AND THE SAFE-CONDUCT; THE POWERLESSNESS OF SIGISMUND; THE ILLNESS OF HUS; REMOVED TO BETTER QUARTERS; A LETTER FROM CHLUM; THE EFFORTS OF CHLUM; PLEASE SEND CHLUM YOUR VIEWS ON THE CUP. 166-70

## PART V

LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE IMPRISON-  
MENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS

HUS IN PRISON; HIS TRACTS; ORIGINALS LOST; PAPER RUNS  
SHORT . . . . . 171-2

## LETTER XL. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE

(January 19, 1415)

His sickness; Consolations in God; I need "your best help";  
His letter falsely translated; No help but Christ; Remember  
my past love and toil for you . . . . . 172-3

## LETTER XLI. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(January 1415)

Get me a Bible, please; Asks Sigismund to release him; He  
has been ill . . . . . 173-4

INQUISITION AT WORK; COMMISSION APPOINTED; "A DOZEN  
MASTERS" . . . . . 175

## LETTER XLII. TO THE SAME

(February 1415)

Do not be weary; The Commission at work; The kindness of  
his gaolers; Jonah and Susannah; Thanks for the Bible;  
Greetings to friends . . . . . 175-6

JAKOUBEK AND THE TROUBLE OVER THE CUP; THE ORIGIN OF THE  
MATTER; THE VIEWS OF HUS . . . . . 176-7

## LETTER XLIII. TO PETER MLADENOWIC

(February 1415)

"Unless I first pay 2,000 ducats"; The Commission again;  
Michael's spies; The simplicity of Jakoubek; "Both  
letters in one envelope" . . . . . 177-8

# CONTENTS

xxiii

PAGE

## LETTER XLIV. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

*(February 1415)*

Don't send his letters on; Sigismund ought to judge him; Procure that at his trial he be near him; No proctor save Jesus; The charges against him; The matter of the safe-conduct; The King ought not to allow him to be thrust back into prison . . . . . 179-81

## LETTER XLV. TO THE SAME

*(February 1415)*

Writing all last night; The right to disendow; The action of Charles IV.; Be careful over his letters; Tell Jerome not to come; Sigismund has forgotten him; Dear Chlum, do not worry concerning expense; His replies to the Forty-five Articles; Two Articles should be quashed; Cardinalis should be careful; Palecz the arch-detective; Persecution of his adherents; Send another shirt; He would like to speak to Sigismund . . . . . 181-4

## LETTER XLVI. TO HIS FRIENDS AT CONSTANCE

*(February 1415)*

His defence; Protest to the Commission; The Sacrament of the Cup; Do not worry over the Commission; Cross-examined again; He will abide by the decision of the Council; Michael and Palecz again; "You have 70,000 florins"; The citation of his adherents . . . . . 184-7

## LETTER XLVII. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

*(February 28 (?), 1415)*

"Await the issue"; Greetings to friends; Racked with stone; The suspicions of the gaolers; Get permission to see him; He will answer Gerson; Don't worry over expense; Eight weeks since he was moved here; Stand by him to the end; He has finished some tracts . . . . . 187-90

PAINTINGS ON THE BETHLEHEM CHAPEL; HUS AND HIS DREAMS. 190

## LETTER XLVIII. TO THE SAME

*(March 4, 1415)*

- Please expound his dream . . . . . 191
- THE ANSWER OF CHLUM; DO NOT WORRY OVER DREAMS; THE  
EXPOSITION; WE REJOICE IN YOUR LETTERS . . . . . 191-3

## LETTER XLIX. TO THE SAME

*(March 6, 1415)*

- "For dreams have no care"; The Bethlehem pictures; Christ  
is his proctor; His defence; "Take no conscious thought  
what ye shall say"; Be careful over the letters . . . . . 193-5
- DELAYS IN THE TRIAL; THE PAPAL DIFFICULTY; THE WAY OF  
CESSION; A LETTER FROM CHLUM; "THAT TATTERED BIT  
OF PAPER"; THE RHYMES OF HUS . . . . . 195-7

## LETTER L. TO HIS FRIENDS

*(Middle March 1415)*

- Hus's rhymes; Susannah and Daniel; "The insults of Christ";  
"This road the Master went"; "I shall not have the  
Sacrament at Easter"; Gerson's charges . . . . . 197-9
- THE ESCAPE OF POPE JOHN; HUS STARVING . . . . . 199

LETTER LI. TO HIS FRIENDS AFTER THE POPE'S  
FLIGHT*(March 21, 1415)*

- Greetings; The Council in confusion, the Pope fled; The  
Council has ignored God . . . . . 200

## LETTER LII. TO THE SAME

*(March 24, 1415)*

- Gaolers are fled; Nothing to eat; Make haste and see  
Sigismund; The designs of Constance; Procure guards  
from the King . . . . . 201



# CONTENTS

XXV

PAGE

## PART VI

### LETTERS WRITTEN FROM THE FRANCISCAN FRIARY

THE BISHOP OF CONSTANCE AND HUS; REMOVED TO GOTTLIEBEN; THE MONTHS OF SILENCE; A PAPAL FELLOW-PRISONER; CONTRAST OF JOHN XXIII. AND HUS; A NEW COMMISSION; WYCLIF CONDEMNED; HIS BONES TO BE BURNT; THE CZECH EFFORTS TO SAVE HUS; BISHOP SUP-WITH-THE-DEVIL; A PUBLIC AUDIENCE GRANTED; HUS BROUGHT BACK TO CON- STANCE; CORRESPONDENCE RECOMMENCED. . . . .	202-5
---	-------

#### LETTER LIII. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(June 5, 1415)

Get Sigismund to stick to his promise; Do not leave him; Greetings to friends; The expenses again; "Out of sight out of mind" . . . . .	205-6
---	-------

THE PUBLIC AUDIENCE AT LAST; A CRAFTY PLAN; TUMULT AND ADJOURNMENT; "DO NOT FEAR FOR ME" . . . . .	206-7
---	-------

#### LETTER LIV. TO HIS FRIENDS AT CONSTANCE

(June 5, 1415)

"Like Jews against Jesus"; An account of the trial; "Let it be burnt"; No friend except the Father . . . . .	207-8
---	-------

JEROME OF PRAGUE; HIS ADVENTURES AND ARREST; IMPRISON- MENT AT CONSTANCE . . . . .	209
---	-----

#### LETTER LV. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(June 6, 1415)

"To-morrow at ten"; His proposed reply; Be careful over the papers; "Jerome also will suffer death" . . . . .	209-10
--	--------

## LETTER LVI. TO PETER MLADENOWIC

(June 6, 1415)

He intends to cleave to the truth; Various legacies; No sum can repay your love; "Accept one of Wyclif's works"; "I fear many may be offended" . . . . . 211-12

THE SECOND AUDIENCE; BETTER ORDER; "THE LOGIC OF SCHOOL-LADS"; SIGISMUND AND THE SAFE-CONDUCT . . . . . 213

## LETTER LVII. TO HIS FRIENDS IN CONSTANCE

(June 7, 1415)

An account of the day's trial; Doctors break down; "Wyclif wanted to destroy all learning"; "This fellow is deceiving the Council"; "Stick to your argument"; "I thought there would be greater order"; Cardinal Bronhiaco and Hus; "You must abjure" . . . . . 214-16

TOOTHACHE; FINAL AUDIENCE; "A KING IN MORTAL SIN IS NOT A KING"; "WHY WAS JOHN DEPOSED?" D'AILLI SUMS UP; CONSCIENCE! SIGISMUND'S MISTAKE; CHLUM'S HANDSHAKE; "THAT FELLOW WHAT'S HIS NAME?" 'JEROME,' THEY SHOUTED" . . . . . 217-18

## LETTER LVIII. TO THE SAME

(June 8, 1415)

Glad *Occultus* is hidden; Instructions to Chlum as to the depositions; Toothache; Qualify his last letter; Do not make his letters public; "God sent you as angels"; Questioned as to books; "Do you wish to abjure?" An unfair alteration of deposition . . . . . 218-21

## LETTER LIX. TO THE SAME

(June 9 or 10, 1415)

Return to Bohemia and enter the service of the King Eternal; Chlum's handshake; The cruel words of Palecz; His dreams again; Warnings of Jerome and Andrew the Tailor; God reward thee, Chlum . . . . . 221-3

# CONTENTS

xxvii

PAGE

HUS'S RESPITE; SWELTERING HEAT; DETERMINED TO OBTAIN A PROFESSED PENITENT; THE REAL POINT AT ISSUE; A MARTYR FOR CONSCIENCE; TRUTH SUPREME; "THE FOURTH PERSON IN THE TRINITY"; THE VALUE OF THIS EMPHASIS OF CONSCIENCE; THE TESTIMONY OF CREIGHTON; LETTERS UNDATED . . .	223-5
---	-------

## LETTER LX. TO THE SAME

*(After June 8, 1415)*

Be careful over the letters; Veit should be careful; Jonah and Susannah; "Able to liberate poor me"; "If the Council told you that you have only one eye"; "The Lord is my protector" . . . . .	225-6
--	-------

## LETTER LXI. TO HENRY SKOPEK DE DUBA

*(June 9, 1415)*

Contrast in serving Christ and Sigismund; Some verses enclosed . . . . .	227-8
---	-------

## LETTER LXII. TO A FRIEND

*(June 9, 1415)*

Please forward the last letter to Skopek . . . . .	229
--	-----

## LETTER LXIII. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

*(After June 8, 1415)*

Sigismund and the safe-conduct; What he ought to have done	229-30
--	--------

## \* LETTER LXIV. TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF BOHEMIA

*(June 10, 1415)*

The letter contains a series of exhortations adapted to the different classes of the nation, to whom Hus has ministered; He also mentions his past frivolity, and beseeches their gratitude to Chlum and Wenzel de Duba; "The Bohemians are our fiercest enemies"; "Support the Bethlehem" . . . . .	230-33
--	--------

	PAGE
LETTER LXV. TO HENRY SKOPEK DE DUBA ( <i>June 13, 1413</i> )	
Thanks for his letters; "Keep God's counsels"; "Greet your wife from me"; "You will never see me again" . . .	234
LETTER LXVI. TO MASTER MARTIN, HIS DISCIPLE ( <i>June 16, 1415</i> )	
Exhortations; If Martin is charged with heresy, what he is to reply; "The Lord still lives"; Greetings to various friends in Prague; Repayment of his creditors; "Farewell evermore" . . . . .	235-7
THE INCIDENT OF HUS AND THE "FATHER"; THE MYSTERY CANNOT BE SOLVED; FIRST LETTER FROM THE "FATHER" . . . . .	237-8
LETTER LXVII. TO THE "FATHER" ( <i>Middle of June</i> )	
Thanks for advice; Reasons why he cannot sign the paper sent him. . . . .	238-9
FURTHER EFFORTS OF THE "FATHER"; THE DELEGATE FROM ERFURT; THE "FATHER'S" SECOND LETTER . . . . .	239-40
LETTER LXVIII. TO THE SAME ( <i>Middle of June 1415</i> )	
Reasons why Hus cannot "abjure" . . . . .	241
THE CHANGE IN HUS'S POSITION; GROWING FIRMNESS OF TONE . . . . .	242
LETTER LXIX. TO HIS FRIENDS IN CONSTANCE ( <i>After June 18, 1415</i> )	
Greetings; Bitter attack on John XXIII.; The illogical position of Palecz; Errors of the Council; Flee evil priests; Defence of the cup . . . . .	242-6



# CONTENTS

xxix

PAGE

## LETTER LXX. TO THE SAME

(*June 21, 1415*)

Hus's final intentions; Thanks to Sigismund! and others . 246-7

## LETTER LXXI. TO GALLUS (HAWLIK), PREACHER IN THE BETHLEHEM

(*June 21, 1415*)

Administer the Cup; The Council's condemnation; Do not quarrel with Jakoubek; The ten thousand martyrs. . 248-9

## LETTER LXXII. TO MASTER CHRISTIAN

(*June 22, 1415*)

Last words and exhortations . . . . . 249-50

## LETTER LXXIII. TO HIS FRIENDS AT CONSTANCE

(*June 23, 1415*)

A beautiful letter of resignation and fortitude; Palecz and Michael; "I am praying for them"; The sorrows of Jesus; "O Jesus, draw me after Thyself" . . . 250-53

## LETTER LXXIV. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS

(*June 24, 1415*)

Do not be terrified; The examples of the past; St. Gregory; St. Chrysostom; The troubles in store for Bohemia; The illogical condemnation of John XXIII.; The errors of the Council; Simony of its members; Why did they elect a homicide Pope? The abomination of desolation; "God will raise up after me braver men" . . . . . 254-8

SWELTERING HEAT; HUS AND PALE CZ; A CONFESSOR SENT;  
STRANGE CLEMENCY . . . . . 258-9

## LETTER LXXV. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(*June 25, 1415*)

His difficulty in abjuring; Extraordinary casuistry; The request for a confessor; His conversation with Palecz; A song of Hus at Gottlieben . . . . . 259-62

	PAGE
LETTER LXXVI. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS	
(June 26, 1415)	
The Council has condemned his Czech books; This holy Council! Its immorality and disorder; Be not afraid of its verdict; "They could not overcome God's power in me"; St. Catherine; God is with him . . . . .	262-5
THE RELAPSE OF JEROME; HIS FUTURE CAREER AND MARTYRDOM	265
LETTER LXXVII. TO THE SAME	
(June 27, 1415)	
His death put off; Master Jerome; Why God has granted him a respite; The sufferings of the Saints . . . . .	265-7
Hus's CHANGED VIEWS . . . . .	267
LETTER LXXVIII. TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PRAGUE	
(June 27, 1415)	
Promote the honour of God; Hus's love for them all; His attitude to the charges; "I find no heresy in myself"; Love the Bethlehem . . . . .	267-9
LETTER LXXIX. TO WENZEL DE DUBA AND JOHN OF CHLUM	
(Undated?)	
The service of Sigismund and Christ compared; Sigismund's deceit . . . . .	269-70
LETTER LXXX. TO JOHN OF CHLUM	
(June 29, 1415)	
The great harlot; Rejoices at the news concerning Chlum; The sufferings and glory of Peter and Paul; Still keep on writing . . . . .	270-72

# CONTENTS

xxxī

	PAGE
LETTER LXXXI. TO WENZEL DE DUBA (June 29, 1415)	
Glad that he is marrying ; Serve God at home now . . .	. 272-3
LETTER LXXXII. TO HIS FRIENDS IN BOHEMIA (June 29, 1415)	
Last greetings to sundry friends . . . . .	. 273-5
SIGISMUND'S INTENDED JOURNEY ; HUS'S FINAL DECLARATION ; A LAST EFFORT TO PROCURE RECANTATION ; THE ADVICE OF CHLUM ; THE ANSWER OF HUS ; THE CONDEMNATION, DEGRA- DATION, AND EXECUTION OF HUS . . . . .	276-80
APPENDIX A. A DOUBTFUL LETTER CONCERNING THE CUP . . . . .	. 281-3
APPENDIX B. TABLE OF DATES AND NUMBERS IN THIS EDITION, PALACKÝ, AND THE <i>Monumenta</i> . . . . .	. 284-6





## INTRODUCTION

*The Letters of Hus* have long been recognised by the best judges as one of the world's spiritual treasures. The discovery of Hus, if we may so express it, forms more than once a landmark in the spiritual development of Luther.

'When I was a tyro at Erfurt,' we read, 'I found in the library of the convent a volume of *The Sermons of John Hus*. When I read the title I had a great curiosity to know what doctrines that heresiarch had propagated, since a volume like this in a public library had been saved from the fire. On reading I was overwhelmed with astonishment. I could not understand for what cause they had burnt so great a man, who explained the Scriptures with so much gravity and skill. But as the very name of Hus was held in so great abomination that I imagined the sky would fall and the sun be darkened if I made honourable mention of him, I shut the book and went away with no little indignation. This, however, was my comfort, that perhaps Hus had written these things before he fell into heresy. For as yet I knew not what was done at the Council of Constance' (*Mon. Hus.* vol. i. Preface).

Some years later, in February 1529, after pondering the matter over with Melancthon, Luther was driven to write to Spalatin: 'I have hitherto taught

and held all the opinions of Hus without knowing it. With a like unconsciousness has Staupitz taught them. We are all of us Hussites without knowing it. I do not know what to think for amazement.' In this letter Luther was probably referring to his reading of the controversial works of Hus, especially his *De Ecclesia*. Shortly afterwards, however, he came across a copy of the *Letters*. At once he perceived their value, not merely in their bearing on the expected Council convoked for Mantua, which subsequently met at Trent in 1542, but for the larger outlook of spiritual life. He took immediate steps for bringing them before the German public. In 1536 and 1537 no less than three different editions in Latin and three editions in German, each of them with a preface by Luther, issued from the presses of Wittenberg and Leipzig. The most important of these editions is that entitled *Epistolæ Quædam Piissimæ et Eruditissimæ*, printed at Wittenberg by John Lufft in 1537, an edition which now forms the sole extant source of many of the letters of Hus. In his preface to this volume Luther is not backward in his praises of the *Letters*. 'Observe,' he writes, 'how firmly Hus clung in his writings and words to the doctrines of Christ; with what courage he struggled against the agonies of death; with what patience and humility he suffered every indignity, and with what greatness of soul he at last confronted a cruel death in defence of the truth; doing all these things alone before an imposing assembly of the great ones of the earth, like a lamb in the midst of lions and wolves. If such a man is to be regarded as a heretic, no person under the sun can be looked

on as a true Christian. By what fruits then shall we recognise the truth, if it is not manifest by those with which John Hus was so richly adorned?’

Luther is not alone in his judgment. *The Letters of Hus*, in the verdict of Bishop Creighton, “give us a touching picture of simple, earnest piety rooted on a deep consciousness of God’s abiding presence. These letters show us neither a fanatic nor a passionate party leader, but a man of childlike spirit, whose one desire was to discharge faithfully his pastoral duties, and to do all things as in the sight of God and not of man.”<sup>1</sup> Other testimonies to the value of this series of letters could easily be adduced, but would add nothing to the decision of the great Reformer and the modern Historian.

We may safely assert that in the years to come *The Letters of Hus* will form the only part of his voluminous writings that will be read even by students. For the works of Hus, as Loserth has shown, are for the most part mere copies of Wyclif, oftentimes whole sections of the great Englishman’s writings transferred bodily, without alteration or acknowledgment. The very titles are not original; their parade of learning, which deceived Luther, is completely borrowed, when not from Wyclif, from Gratian and other recognised mediæval handbooks. The Englishman Stokes was right when at Constance he bluntly asked: ‘Why do you glory in these writings, falsely labelling them your own, since after all they belong not to you but Wyclif, in whose steps you are following?’ To the same end was the taunt of his former friend, Andrew Brod:

<sup>1</sup> Creighton, *Papacy*, ii. 22. Creighton refers especially to the Letters in Part III., which some may think the least interesting of all.



'Was Wyclif crucified for us? were we baptised in his name?'

The case is otherwise with Hus's *Letters*, eighty-two<sup>1</sup> of which have escaped the ravages of Time. For if the controversial works of Hus have contributed little to the intellectual heritage of mankind, his *Letters* have enriched for ever our moral outlook. The preservation of these letters we owe for the most part to the care of Peter Mladenowic, the secretary of John of Chlum. They form a priceless memorial of one of the truest hearted of the sons of God. His later correspondence especially, his letters from exile and prison, show John Hus to be one of the chosen few who exalt humanity. Though undoubtedly the last letters are the most interesting, inasmuch as in them the personal note reaches its highest, yet in the whole series there is nothing that is unworthy, little that is tedious. Bishop Creighton is correct in his judgment: "Everything Hus writes is the result of his own soul's experience, is penetrated with a deep moral earnestness, illuminated with a boldness and a self-forgetfulness that breathes the spirit of the cry, 'Let God be true and every man a liar.'" In the belief that a wider acquaintance with *The Letters of Hus* will lead to a general endorsement of this verdict, we have translated into English these priceless human documents.

<sup>1</sup> Of these, sixty-six—one of which, however, is spurious—are to be found in the *Monumenta*, and were translated by Bonnechose and Mackenzie; nine were first printed by Höfler; the rest were discovered and edited at different times by Pez, Erben, and Palacký.



## Part I.—Letters Written Before the Death of Archbishop Zbinek

(June 30, 1408—September 28, 1411)

JOHN OF HUSINECZ—a name which he abbreviated, except in formal documents, into the more familiar Hus—was the child of poor peasants in Husinecz, a village of Bohemia not far from the Bavarian frontier. The date of his birth is uncertain, but is usually accepted, on somewhat doubtful evidence, as 1369. Round the childhood of Hus there gathered in later years the usual tales with which fond memory strives to fill the gaps of ignorance. Some of these have a suspicious resemblance to similar tales concerning Luther; others are manifestly coined from the fact that in Czech the word hus, or husca, means “goose”—etymologically, of course, it is the same word—a play on the name which we shall meet with again and again in the *Letters*. Of the brothers and sisters of Hus we know nothing. In the sons of a brother he showed a touching interest in his last days (*infra*, p. 236).

On entering the University of Prague Hus supported himself, as Luther at Erfurt, by singing in the churches and by menial services. His piety at this time, though sincere, was of the usual type. In 1392 we find Hus, following in this matter the lead of Stiekna (*infra*, p. 121, *n.*), parting with his last four groschen to a seller of indulgences at the Wyschehrad—a suburb of Prague—‘so that there

## 6      LETTERS WRITTEN BEFORE THE

remained only dry bread for his support.' In one of the intensely subjective epistles of his last year (*infra*, p. 150), Hus reproached himself with his youthful levity, especially the time he wasted in chess, and his inability to lose a game without anger. Such reproaches, as in the case of Cromwell, Bunyan, and the Puritans in general, are rather the evidence of a tender conscience than of any real depravity of heart.

In 1396 Hus took his Master's degree in Arts, and two years later began to deliver lectures as a public teacher. In 1401 he was made dean of the faculty of philosophy, and in the following year became the rector of the University, a position he occupied for about six months to the end of April 1403. Nevertheless, his achievements at the University were in nowise remarkable. Though he read the larger part of the course necessary for the degree in Divinity, in 1394, graduating as Bachelor, and in 1401 lecturing on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, he never incepted as doctor,<sup>1</sup> while the wide knowledge that appears in his writings is but borrowed learning. Among his teachers at the University we may note with interest the name of Stanislas of Znaim, in later years his bitter foe.

In 1400 Hus obtained priest's orders; his object, he tells us, was the comfortable life led by the clergy. Two years later (March 14, 1402) he was appointed preacher at the Chapel of the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem. To this church a dwelling-room was attached, from which a staircase led direct to the pulpit. This appointment gave Hus his opportunity. The Bethlehem Chapel in Prague—a vast building destroyed by the Jesuits in 1786

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, p. 140: note on "Baccalareus formatus."

—had been erected and endowed (May 24, 1391) by two wealthy laymen, on the condition that its rector should be a secular, and preach every Sunday and festival exclusively in the Czech language. Thus the Chapel—‘Bethlehem, which is, being interpreted, house of bread, because there the common people should be refreshed with the bread of preaching’—was both the product and expression of the new consciousness of Czech nationalism, and of the recent religious revival. Not only the Bethlehem, but almost everything else in Prague, University included, was new. The whole town was seething with a new life, with a quickened interest in religion, and with the fierce determination of the Czechs to throw off all bondage to the Germans, and, if possible, assert their own supremacy. Of all this the movement led by Hus was but one phase and outlet. For from the first Hus flung himself with passionate earnestness into the national movement. ‘The Czechs,’ he cried in one of his sermons, ‘in this part are more wretched than dogs or snakes, for a dog defends the couch on which he lies, and if another dog tries to drive him away he fights with him. A snake does the same. But we let the Germans oppress us, and occupy all the offices, without complaint.’

In addition to the new consciousness of Czech nationalism, a new determination to resist the German pressure, and the new revival of religion brought about by the labours of Milicz of Kremsier, Conrad of Waldhausen, and Mathias of Janow, the student will discern a third factor in the life of Hus. This was his making acquaintance with the works of Wyclif. The precise year in which the



writings of the great English heresiarch were introduced into Bohemia cannot now be determined, and for our present purpose is not material. Suffice that in the Fall of 1401 Jerome of Prague, who in 1398 had obtained his licentiate at the University of Prague, and permission to go abroad, came back from Oxford, bringing with him copies of Wyclif's *Dialogue* and *Triologue*, together with some other lesser works. All these Jerome had written out with his own hand. 'Young men and students,' he said in a public disputation, 'who did not study the books of Wyclif would never find the true root of knowledge.' With this conviction he introduced the works to John Christian of Prachaticz and John Hus. Hus was, however, already acquainted with the purely philosophical treatises of Wyclif. Of this we have evidence in the five tractates of Wyclif now in the Royal Library at Stockholm, written out by Hus 'with his own hand in 1398,' and carried off by the Swedes in 1648 as part of the spoils of the Bohemian War.

Before long the strife over Wyclif had broken out in Bohemia. In April 1403 Hus ceased to be the rector of the University, and Walter Harrasser, a German, was elected in his place. On May 28, 1403, the new rector, at the instance of the chapter of Prague—for the archbishopric at this time was still vacant—issued an order forbidding any discussion of the twenty-four articles from Wyclif's works already condemned in England at the famous Blackfriars or Earthquake Synod (May 21, 1382). To these were further added twenty-one articles extracted by Hübner, a Silesian master. The prohibition remained a dead letter, though, as we shall



see in the *Letters*, these forty-five articles played no small part at Constance. The whole affair, in fact, seems to have been an attempt by the German Nominalists to score over the Czech Realists, who for their part contented themselves with protesting, somewhat unfairly, that the condemned propositions—at any rate, the additions of Hübner—were not to be found in Wyclif. The struggle as yet was chiefly one of the Schools; for at Prague the constant fight of Czech and Teuton had passed into a struggle of philosophical creeds. Whatever the one “nation” espoused, the other condemned. The Germans had embraced Nominalism—of itself a sufficient reason for the Czechs to become uncompromising Realists and to rally to the defence of so thorough-going a Realist as Wyclif.

The leader of the Czech Realists at this time would appear to have been Stanislaus of Znaim, from whose teaching in the University Hus acknowledges that he had learned much. In a squib of the times we read:—

Wyclif, the son of the Devil, begat Stanislaus of Znaim,  
 who begat Peter of Znaim, and Peter of Znaim begat  
 Stephen Palecz, and Stephen Palecz begat Hus.

In the controversy on the forty-five articles Stanislaus defended the incriminated doctrines with warmth: ‘Let him who likes rise up and attack; I am willing to defend.’ He spoke so haughtily that ‘some of the senior doctors left the congregation.’ Shortly afterwards he published a tractate, *De Remanentia Panis*, and ‘argued boldly in the schools’ on the side of Wyclif. Stanislaus’s tractate was pronounced heretical by the Saxon master, Ludolph Meistermann—one of the leaders in the Secession of 1409. In

the end Stanislas was 'forced to recant.' With Stanislas, though less prominent and pronounced, Stephen Palecz was closely associated. In the Church, as on the stage, one man in his time plays many parts.

Among these Realists or Wyclifists we must already reckon John Hus. In a Taborite document we read: 'These books of the evangelical doctor, as is known from credible witnesses, opened the eyes of Master John Hus of blessed memory, whilst reading and re-reading the same in connection with his adherents.' At one time it would seem he had shrunk back from Wyclif's theological teaching, though welcoming his philosophical positions. "Oh, Wyclif, Wyclif," he had cried in a Czech sermon, making use of an untranslatable pun, "how you will make our heads to waggle (*zwickles*)." But this dread was fast disappearing.

Hitherto any part that Hus may have taken in the controversy over Wyclif had been political rather than religious. But in 1408 circumstances arose which compelled Hus, in spite of himself, to place himself at the head of the Bohemian Lollards, though he probably still deceived himself by imagining that they were but Czech Realists. This continued unconsciousness of whither he was drifting, together with the drift itself, is brought out very clearly in the first letter of Hus preserved for us, written in the early summer of 1408. From this point we shall leave the *Letters*, as far as possible, to tell their own story, adding only such connecting narratives and notes as may be needful to bind together these living fragments into an intelligible whole.

## LETTER I

ARCHBISHOP ZBINEK ZAZIC OF HASENBURG had been elected while still young to the metropolitan see of Prague (November 29, 1402). The choice was a mistake. As a prelate Zbinek was weak though well-intentioned, more at home in the camp than in the council-chamber, little fitted to guide the Church of Bohemia in the complex struggle into which it had entered. A Czech himself, he was at first inclined to sympathise with the Czech reformers or nationalists. At one time, as this letter shows, Hus enjoyed the complete confidence of the Archbishop. In 1405 Zbinek appointed Hus the special preacher before the Bohemian Synod. In the same year he nominated Hus to serve on a commission to investigate certain frauds carried on at Wilsnack, a village of Brandenburg, in connection with a relic of the blood of Christ. In 1407 Zbinek gave proof of the continuance of his friendship by once more appointing Hus the special preacher to the Synod. The sermons which Hus preached on these occasions have been preserved, and show no signs of revolt. The preacher confined himself to the stock theme of the vices of the clergy, sheltering himself, as was usual in such discourses, behind the authority of St. Bernard. But the events of 1408, and the pronounced part that thenceforth Hus took in the spread of Wyclif's doctrines, turned the Archbishop's favour into enmity. This letter of Hus, which the impartial critic will probably condemn as somewhat lacking in respect, contributed no doubt to the growing estrangement.

The circumstances which provoked the letter were as follows: In spite of the condemnation of 1403, the Wyclifists, as Stephen Dolein (*infra*, p. 74) complained, swarmed everywhere 'in state apartments of princes, the schools of the students, the lonely chambers of the monks, and the cells of the Carthusians.' Large sums of money were paid for manuscripts of the English doctor, and corrected copies were constantly brought from England. So rapid was the spread of his doctrines that in 1406 Zbinek, acting on the orders of Innocent VII., threatened with punishment all those who preached the heresies of the Reformer, and ordered that the Roman dogma of the Sacrament should be proclaimed to the people on the next Feast of Corpus Christi.

As the proclamation produced little effect, Zbinek resorted to other measures. In the May and June of 1408 certain masters



of Prague were brought up before the Archbishop's deputies. Their names were Sigismund of Jistebnicz, Matthias Pater of Knin, Nicholas of Welemowicz, and another of whose name we are ignorant. One of these, Nicholas of Welemowitz, familiarly known as "Abraham," an unlicensed preacher in the Church of the Holy Ghost at Prague, had asserted the Lollard idea that 'laymen as well as priests should be allowed to preach,' and at his trial refused to take any oath, "save by the living God." Hus, who was present in court, openly defended Nicholas in the matter of the oath by a quotation from Chrysostom, for which he was indebted to Gratian's *Decretum*.<sup>1</sup> "Ah, master," retorted the Vicar-General, Kbel, "you came here to hear, not to talk." Thus silenced in court, Hus appealed to Zbinek direct. The next day, July 1, 1408—a day which fixes the date of the letter—"Abraham" was released, though not, we imagine, in consequence of Hus's interference. In reality, the trials were not pressed, though Matthias Pater of Knin was forced to abjure; for Wenzel the King was anxious to further his political projects (see *infra*, p. 18) by obtaining a clean bill, if we may so put it, for the character of his subjects. Accordingly Zbinek, a few days after the release of "Abraham," declared in a Synod at Prague (July 17, 1408) 'that after making diligent inquisition, he could find no heretic in Bohemia.'

### I. TO ZBINEK, ARCHBISHOP OF PRAGUE

(Undated : June 30, 1408 ; Prague)

Most reverend father, your obedient servant in the faith and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I very often remind myself how at the beginning of your rule your reverence (*paternitas*) laid it down as a regulation that whenever I noticed any laxity of discipline, I should report it at once, either personally or, failing this, by letter. It is in accordance

<sup>1</sup> *Dec. Pars II. C. 22, q. 1, c. 11.* Really from *Auctor Operis imperfecti* in *Matt.* homily 44 on c. xxiii. (see *infra*, p. 65, n.). Hus may, however, have learned the passage from Wyclif, who quotes it in full in the *Op. Evangel.* lib. iii. p. 47 (*De Antichristo*, lib. i. c. 13).



with this regulation that I am now forced to make a statement to the effect that incestuous and criminal persons are escaping rigorous correction.<sup>1</sup> They go about without restraint like untamed bulls and runaway horses with outstretched necks, while humble priests who pluck away the thorns of sin and fulfil their duties under your rule in an excellent spirit, who shun avarice and give themselves freely for God's sake to the work of preaching the gospel, are thrown into prison and suffer exile, as if they were heretics, for preaching this same gospel. Reverend father, where is the piety of preventing the preaching of the gospel—the first duty Christ enjoined on His disciples, when He said: *Preach the gospel to every creature?*<sup>2</sup> Where is the discretion of restraining from their toils diligent and faithful labourers? In very truth, I cannot think it is your grace, but the madness of others, that sows such seed. What poor priest will dare to attack crimes or to inveigh against vices? *Truly the harvest is great, but the true labourers are few. Therefore, father, pray the Lord of the harvest that He may send faithful labourers into the harvest.*<sup>3</sup> For it resteth with your grace to reap the entire harvest of the kingdom of Bohemia, to gather it into the Lord's garner and to give an account for every sheaf in the day of death. But how can so large a multitude of sheaves be stored up by your grace in the Lord's garner if you take away from the reapers their sickle, to wit, their power of speech, at the whim of indolent persons, who neither reap themselves nor suffer others to do so, when their

<sup>1</sup> P.: *absque rigo* (sic) *correctionis*; read *rigore*.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. ix. 37, 38.

crimes feel the lash of God's word? Herein, alas! is the word of the apostle fulfilled: *They will not endure sound doctrine, they will turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables and will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.*<sup>1</sup> Verily this saying of the apostle's will receive fulfilment, seeing that *charity hath grown cold* among the clergy, and *iniquity hath abounded*<sup>2</sup> among the people, because the clergy have failed in charity and given up preaching the gospel and faithful imitation of Christ. For which of us, alas! is following the life of Christ in poverty, chastity, humility, and diligent preaching? Woe, woe, woe! the apostle's word is fulfilled: *All seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's.*<sup>3</sup> Therefore, most reverend father, turn your eyes to the things of the spirit, love good men, mark the bad, do not be flattered by the vain and greedy, but delight in men of humble mind and lovers of poverty. Drive the lazy to work, do not hinder faithful toilers in the Lord's harvest-field: for that may not be bound<sup>4</sup> which achieves the salvation of souls.<sup>5</sup> I would write at greater length; but I am hindered by the toils of preaching. The Lord Almighty direct the mind of your grace as regards the matters written above, that you may render due account at the fitting time to the Shepherd of shepherds.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. Altered in order of clauses.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. ii. 21.

<sup>4</sup> P.: *quod non est alligatum*; for *est* read *sit*.

<sup>5</sup> P.: *animorum* (sic); read *animarum*.

## LETTER II

THE following letter, written in Czech, is without date, but may be referred to this period. Several of the songs of Hus, in addition to the rhymes written in prison (*infra*, pp. 197, 228), have been preserved for us. The only one of any merit is a short poem, *De Cœna Domini*, printed in the second volume of the *Historia et Monumenta* (*Mon.* ii. 348a). The "Holy Virgins" refer to St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand. The student will notice that, though Hus more than once refers to this feast (*infra*, pp. 17, 155), he never mentions St. Ursula. St. Ursula, in fact, was a later addition to the legend, the original form of which would appear to have been the Eleven Thousand.<sup>1</sup> As the feast takes place on October 21, we may date this letter September or October 1408. But there is nothing in the letter itself that would rule out an even earlier year, though the absence of all polemical tone would shut out a later date.

## II. TO THE NUNS OF A CERTAIN CONVENT

(Undated : September 1408 ?)

May it please your husband the Lord Jesus to grant unto you His grace, and to strengthen you in your grace and virginity! You have loved Him above all others, and that in truth most wisely. For He is a King most wise and most powerful, the wealthiest, the strongest, the altogether lovely, and therefore of all most pleasant. He doeth no violence or wrong to His brides, and bringeth no distress to them. He doth not grow old to them. He never breaketh His troth; neither indeed can He. He will be with them for ever, and they will find Him ever ready to their desire, and thus each of them shall be filled with the kingdom of heaven. In that kingdom each man and woman will do His bidding. Each sister shall have her desire, which can never be for aught that is evil.

<sup>1</sup> See *Owens College Historical Essays*, pp. 16-56.



Ponder this well, dear brides of Christ the glorious King. Forsake Him not for any other that is wicked, unclean, base, and defiled, with whom you shall have more distress than joy. For if that other is good-looking, you will be afraid of his unfaithfulness; if deformed, of ennui; if drunken or bad-tempered or of other evil habits, of a devil's life. If offspring be granted to you, there will be misery during pregnancy and in the birth and in the training of the child. If barrenness be your lot, there will be disgrace, distress, and an imperfect union. If a child is born, you will have fears of its survival or of its deformity. Who can recount the miseries from which the blessed unwedded life in Christ is free, and such virginity as His mother's, which is exalted above widowhood and matrimony? The Holy Scriptures bear witness that the angels delight in such a life,<sup>1</sup> and it is to this that Jesus invites us when He says: *He that can take, let him take it.*<sup>2</sup> St. Paul also useth much argument in its favour.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, beloved virgins, brides and daughters of Christ, keep unspotted for Him your virginity, which is the guarding of the will from carnal taint in man or in woman who, like Christ and the Virgin, have never yielded to bodily passion. Blessed shall be the celibate and the virgin when by such a life and the keeping of God's other commands they shall receive the chief crown—to wit, their reward in eternal bliss! Strive earnestly for this even unto death, dear brides of Christ. You shall win this prize of your faithfulness if you hold in remembrance the eternal kingdom, mark the vanity of the world, beware of evil habits, keep your heart under by toil,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii. 30.<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 12.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8.



love not fine dress, and often partake of the body of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

I beg you to keep all this well in mind. If God give me leisure and a letter-carrier, I will write to you at greater length. I send you a song to chant at the vespers of the holy virgins, so that, as you bethink you of the words, you may have joy in your hearts and make melody with your lips. Chant, however, in such a manner that you will not be overheard by the men; for they might cherish evil purposes, while you might fall into the sin of pride or of scandal.

MASTER JOHN HUS, a weakling priest.

### LETTER III

A FULL explanation of all the circumstances which led to the writing of this letter would take us far afield. There were wheels within wheels in the complex politico-religious race-feuds and Church struggles of the times. At Prague three distinct issues had become curiously mixed up together towards the close of 1408, in all of which Hus was a leading actor. There was first of all the issue to which this letter especially refers. Tired of the delays of Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII. in coming to any arrangement for ending the great schism, the cardinals of both Pope and anti-pope had withdrawn to Leghorn, and thence on June 24, 1408, had summoned a council to meet at Pisa on March 25, 1409. Under pressure from the University of Paris Europe prepared to obey. What course Bohemia would take was for the moment uncertain. But Wenzel found that

<sup>1</sup> The question of the frequency of communion had been much discussed in Bohemia since the days of Mathias of Janow and Milicz of Kremsier, the two forerunners of Hus. On October 18, 1389 Mathias of Janow was compelled by the Synod of Prague to retract his teaching 'that the laity ought to be exhorted to daily communion' (*Doc.* 70). While in prison in Constance, Hus urged in his tract *De Cena Domini* the necessity of daily communion in similar language to that of Janow (see *Mon.* i. 41b; Loserth, *Wyclif and Hus*, pp. 52-63).

Gregory XII. continued to recognise his rival Rupert as king of the Romans. So he determined, at the instance of an envoy of France, that he would side with the cardinals at Pisa, at least to the extent that he would remain neutral (November 24, 1408). For a similar but opposite reason the Germans remained faithful to Gregory and the<sup>3</sup> Rhenish Kaiser, whom they had elected (May 25, 1400) in the place of the drunkard Wenzel. This in itself was sufficient to induce the Bohemian "nation" to follow Hus, when he took up the idea of Wenzel, and brought it before the University. From this arose complication number two. The Czechs found that in the University they were powerless; they had but one vote. The Bavarians and Saxons controlled the Senate, and had the support of Zbinek and the clergy—complication number three—who discerned clearly the danger to themselves in the triumph of Wyclifist Realism, and of the religious and national enthusiasm with which it had become identified. For the Bohemian Church, as Jerome pointed out at Constance, was at this time almost an alien or German institution, fast slipping back into the dependence from which Charles IV. had endeavoured to save it. The Czechs, who had long groaned at the ascendancy of strangers, judged the present a suitable time, by the help of Wenzel, to establish their supremacy, at any rate in the University. Under the lead of Hus they induced Wenzel to decree that the Bohemians should have three votes, the other three nations but one (January 18th, 1409).

The consequences are well known. After a short struggle the "three nations"—variously estimated by mediæval writers at all figures up to 44,000; in reality, as the recently published Matriculation rolls of Leipzig University show us, under 1,000—'according to their oath quitted the city, some on foot, others on horseback and waggons,' and founded the University of Leipzig. But a scanty remnant of under 500 Czechs were left behind in Prague. The victory was ascribed to Hus; he was at once appointed rector of the mutilated Czech University. "Praise God," he said, in one of his sermons, "we have excluded the Germans." In reality, it was one of the most fatal moves he ever made, and was remembered against him in later years, as the *Letters* show.

This matter of the "neutrality," mixed up as it was with the disruption of a University of which Zbinek was chancellor,

produced a complete breach, as this letter shows, between the Archbishop and Hus. As a strong adherent of Gregory XII., Zbinek entered into the struggle with the Pisan cardinals by inhibiting, as Hus tells us, 'in letters fixed to the doors of the churches,' from all priestly functions Hus and 'all masters who sided with the sacred college' (*infra*, p. 55).

To this challenge Hus replied in the following remonstrance, which we date early in December 1408. It cannot have been written later, for in January 1409 Hus fell dangerously ill, while Wenzel's decree of "neutrality"—a strong adhesion to the Pisan cardinals—evidently had not yet been issued. From the absence, further, of any reference to the imprisonment of Palecz and Stanislaus of Znaim (see *infra*, p. 73), we judge that the news of their arrest had not yet reached Prague (about December 8, 1408), for Hus would otherwise have blamed Zbinek for it, or in some way have identified himself with his friends. For, as *The Chronicle of the University* informs us, Hus and Christian Prachaticz were the chief agents in procuring their release.<sup>1</sup>

### III. TO ZBINEK, ARCHBISHOP OF PRAGUE

(Undated: early December 1408)

Your humble and dutiful subject now and ever!

It is demanded by our Saviour's rule that a father should not proceed rashly to the reprobation of a son unless the son rejects his father's counsel and is clearly convicted of contumacy;<sup>2</sup> nor ought the father of the household to drive away from the harvest a son who works, unless he first of all clearly knows that the son is minded disgracefully to squander his father's harvest. Thus in the sixteenth of Luke it is shown by our Saviour that the rich man did not give up the steward after hearing the charge of wrong-doing brought against him, but wisely summoned him and said: *How is it that I hear*

<sup>1</sup> *Documenta*, p. 731.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 15-17.



*this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship.*<sup>1</sup> Nor did our Saviour forbid a certain man who cast out devils not being His follower from so doing; but rather He desired to lend His authority to such acts: for in the ninth of Luke it is written that the disciples said to Jesus: *Master, we saw a certain man casting out devils in Thy name and we forbid him, because he followeth not Thee with us. And Jesus said to them, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.*<sup>2</sup>

Now, most reverend father, your grace hath been instructed in these examples of our Saviour, and should not have listened to the infamous charges of jealous men—charges set forth in writing in Latin as well as in the vernacular. You should not have branded me with public insinuations as a disobedient son of our holy mother Church; but you should have ascertained the truth and said: *How is it that I hear this of thee?* If I had been in error, you should have enjoined a pious correction; and if I had failed to give up my disobedience to the holy mother Church, you should then have had recourse to suitable measures and declared me as disobedient, and as a matter of expediency have forbidden me to preach the holy gospel. Your grace ought therefore to know that it never hath been, nor will be, as I trust in God, my intention to withdraw from obedience to the holy mother Church. It is my intention not only to obey the Roman pontiff and your grace in accordance with the blessed Peter's command, but also to be subject to every human creature for God's sake, whether it be to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him.<sup>3</sup> Further on he adds: *Be subject to your*

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvi. 2.<sup>2</sup> Luke ix. 49, 50.<sup>3</sup> 1 Peter ii. 13.



*masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*<sup>1</sup> See how the apostle of Christ commands obedience to every human creature and to froward rulers, but obedience for God's sake, and not in the case of commands that are froward, but those which are lawful and uttered to the praise of God Almighty, to the end that servants may obey their masters and those set over them. Whatever, therefore, the Roman pontiff Gregory XII. or the holy mother Church, yea, and your grace, lawfully enjoins, I will humbly obey. But I cannot engage in controversy to win the greater praise: for our Saviour forbade this to His disciples in Luke xii.;<sup>2</sup> nor can I side with my apostolic lord in his failure to observe the oath which was sworn, as it were, before all Christendom.<sup>3</sup> For in so doing I should be acting contrary to Christ, who says in Matt. v.: *Let your speech be, Yea, yea: no, no:*<sup>4</sup> and who says by the prophet: *Vow ye, and pray to the Lord your God.*<sup>5</sup> Therefore as far as these two points are concerned, the controversy of Pope and anti-pope and the breaking of the oath, I am neutral; but not in the sense of the term as used by the crowd who are ignorant that "neutral" is a relative term like the simple word from which it is compounded, requiring the context of the subject matter.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, when the phrase "He is neutral" is used, it is unintelligible unless the alternatives are added, and it is clearly shown in what respect he

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter ii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii. 58.

<sup>3</sup> See *The Age of Hus*, p. 44; Niem. *De Schismate* (ed. Eriker), pp. 206-9.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. v. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. lxxv. 12. Vulg. (A.V. lxxvi. 11).

<sup>6</sup> P.: *requirens substantiam adjacentiam*. Better, on the whole, to read with Höfler, *adjacentium*.

intends to be neutral in his support.<sup>1</sup> And further it does not follow that a third person is neutral, because he refuses to obey either of two others: as, for example, if the mother of Peter quarrels with his father, Peter as a faithful son ought to be neutral in his support in the dispute between his father and mother, while at the same time he ought to obey father as well as mother in matters lawful. Hence Peter ought not to be neutral so far as obedience is concerned, but only so far as his support in the dispute is concerned; for he ought as far as possible to prevent a dispute of this kind, in order that, peace being restored, his father and mother may more securely be united in love and beget brothers for Peter.

Furthermore, most beloved and reverend father, my enemies hurl insults at me as they have been wont to do for a long time. I could write of these at greater length, but let this suffice for the present, that if your grace discovers the fault in me, I am willing humbly to submit to punishment. Yet I humbly beg your grace for God's sake not to put trust in every one, and not to suspend me from preaching now that you have received this written testimony that I have not departed from obedience to the Roman pontiff Gregory XII. Nay, last Sunday I publicly said in the pulpit in my sermon that I had not withdrawn from allegiance to my lord Pope Gregory, but desired to obey the holy Roman Church and its lord in all lawful matters. If your grace had known of this, perhaps you would not have placed me in your letters as your first disobedient son, like a mark for the arrow. But I ought

<sup>1</sup> *In quo est neutralis quoad auxilium intentione.*

to suffer, because the Saviour saith: *Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven*;<sup>1</sup> and this reward may it please our Lord Jesus Christ to grant to your grace. Amen.

#### LETTER IV

A FEW weeks after the release of "Abraham" (*supra*, p. 12) and on the eve of the outbreak of the "neutrality" complication, the clergy—most of whom, as we have seen, were Germans, out of touch with the Czech population—accused Hus before the Archbishop of preaching 'in the presence of a vast multitude of both sexes' 'scandalous sermons, which made clerks hateful to the people.' He had gone so far, they said, as to 'deal with the matter not in general terms, but by descending to particulars.' They further raked up an incident of which Hus was destined to hear much for the rest of his life: that in the presence of Zbinek he had said 'he wished his soul might be where rests the soul of Wyclif.' That Hus still felt confident of his position is evident not only from the reply he made to this last charge, but in the contempt, not infrequently degenerating into quibbles, with which he overwhelmed his accusers. Zbinek, in fact, was powerless and scarcely needed the array of quotations from Gratian's *Decretum* upon which the Reformer fell back in his more serious argument. Hus reminded him of his recent declaration 'that he could find no heretic in Bohemia.' The opponents of Hus were caught 'in a trap of their own making.'

The date of this complaint of the clergy is uncertain, but may be ascribed with confidence to the autumn of 1408, though it would appear to have been repeated in the following year. To this same period (autumn 1408), certainly before the expulsion of the Germans from the University, to which no allusion is made, we assign the following letter to Zavis of Zap, a canon of Prague and non-resident rector of Prachaticz. As Zap had taken his Master's degree at Prague in 1380, he must have been at least ten years or so older than Hus. We judge from the letter that he was one of the leaders in the complaint of the clergy. In the previous June he had acted as one of the judges in the trial of "Abraham" (*Doc.* p. 342).

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 12.



## IV. TO MASTER ZAWISSIUS, RECTOR OF PRACHATICZ

(Late autumn, 1408)

Greetings from the Lord Jesus Christ! Reverend sir, it hath come to my ears that you have spoken of me in plain words as a heretic. If this is so, I beg you to send me a reply. You will then see, by God's grace, that I will publicly confess and defend the faith I hold, not by detraction in nooks and corners, but in manner becoming a true Christian. I would that you knew yourself and the way you have been shearing the sheep in Prachaticz this thirty years or more! Where do you reside? Where do you work? Where do you feed the sheep? You forget the Lord's word: *Woe to the shepherds . . . that feed themselves, but the flock they did not feed.*<sup>1</sup> Where, pray, is your fulfilment of this gospel of Christ: *The good shepherd goeth before the sheep and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice?*<sup>2</sup> In what way do you pass before the sheep, and how do they follow you or hear your voice when for many years together they rarely set eyes on you? The day will come when you will give an account of your sheep and also of the plural livings you have held. Of this last you read in your canon law that he who can get a competence out of one, cannot hold another without committing mortal sin.<sup>3</sup>

You ought to take these things to heart and not charge your neighbour with heresy. At all events, if you are certain he is a heretic, you ought to

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxiv. 8.<sup>2</sup> John x. 4.<sup>3</sup> See Gratian, Pars II. C. 21, q. 1, also *ib.* C. 12, q. 1. Hus dwells on this in his sermon before the Synod (*Mon.* ii. 39*b*), where he quotes the above passages from Gratian.



admonish him once or twice according to the apostle's precept, and if he will not receive the admonition, then you may *reject him as a heretic*,<sup>1</sup> the more so as you are a master and doctor of the law able, nay bound, to occupy your master's chair for the public defence of the truth.

I write these words by way of brotherly advice according to Christ's precept: *If thy brother shall offend against thee, rebuke him between thee and him.*<sup>2</sup> Therefore, brother, receive me; and if you have spoken in this way about me, say so in your reply. If you prove me a heretic, I will humbly make amends and you will receive the reward of restoring a sinner *from the error of his way.*<sup>3</sup> Yet by the grace of God Almighty I hope I hold the same faith in the Lord Jesus as yourself and as truly, seeing that I am ready to suffer death on its behalf in humility and hope.

## LETTER V

WITH the expulsion of the Germans and the loss of the national struggle, events at Prague moved rapidly towards a religious crisis. 'Immediately after,' we read, 'Wiclify began to grow strong, and Hus and his adherents renounced their spiritual obedience under the favour of the laity.' All that Zbinek could do was to persuade the Bohemian nation in the University to severely restrict the right of lecturing on Wyclif, or defending his propositions. The Wyclifists retorted—Hus himself did not join them—by procuring the citation of the Archbishop before the Pisan Curia. Zbinek, realising his isolation by the expulsion of his German allies, deemed it well to abandon Gregory, and make his peace with Alexander V. This he did on September 2, amid universal rejoicing, blaring of trumpets 'to the fourth hour of night,' 'six hundred bonfires,' and the like. Thus

<sup>1</sup> Titus iii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> James v. 20.

secure of his own position, Zbinek accused the Wyclifists of being the source of all the mischief. He had his reward on December 20. Alexander quashed the citation, and conferred upon Zbinek a commission to take strong steps against the heretics, forbidding also all preaching 'in chapels, even those which had privileges granted by the Apostolic See.' This last was an attack upon the Bethehem, whose rights had been ratified by Gregory XII. (May 15, 1408). Alexander further ordered that all books of Wyclif should be delivered up to the Archbishop, 'that they might be removed from the eyes of the faithful.'

On the publication of this bull in Prague (March 9, 1410), Hus and his friends handed over to the Archbishop certain works of Wyclif: 'When,' they added, 'you have found any errors in them, be pleased to point them out to us, and we shall be glad to denounce them publicly.' Zbinek's sole reply was an order that seventeen books of Wyclif, whose names are given, should be burnt, 'the remaining books of the said John, heresiarch, to await' fuller examination. Notice of this decision, endowed by a synod in Prague, was served upon Hus and his associates (June 16). The fact that several of the condemned works were purely philosophical shows that the Nominalist faction had not been altogether silenced by the expulsion of the Germans.

Against this attack on its freedom the University at once protested (June 21). Hus, who especially resented the prohibition of further preaching in the Bethlehem, had already appealed on his own account 'to Alexander himself that he might be better informed.' On his decease, Hus and others (among whom we notice Zdislaw of Wartenberg and Peter of Zepekow, a student who owned the copy of the *De Ecclesia* of Wyclif now in the University Library at Prague) further appealed to John XXIII. (June 25), urging that with the death of Alexander the commission had become null and void. They had obtained, they pleaded, the books of Wyclif 'at great trouble and cost.' Only a fool 'would condemn to be burnt treatises, logical, philosophical, mathematical, moral, which contain many noble truths, but no errors. By the same reasoning we must burn the books of Aristotle, the commentaries of Averrhoes, or the works of Origen.' They further protested against the charge that Bohemia was full of heretics, quoting against Zbinek his own declaration. Alexander's bull, they concluded, was obtained by fraud and forgery, in which last the friars had borne a hand.

Before the appeal could be considered, Zbinek, who had at first consented to postpone execution until the Margrave Jobst could arrive in Prague, brought matters to a head by burning two hundred manuscripts of Wyclif's works in the courtyard of his palace on the Hradschin, 'in the presence of a number of prelates and clergy, who chanted the Te Deum with a loud voice, while the bells were tolled as if for the dead.' 'The better copies,' some of them bound with gold knobs, 'were, however, it is believed, kept over' (July 16, 1410). Two days later, Zbinek, amid the angry cries of the people, excommunicated Hus and others for not yet delivering up their copies and 'for opposing the Catholic faith' by their frivolous processes. Wenzel retorted by ordering the Archbishop to refund the value of the burnt volumes to their owners, and on his refusal seized his revenues.

The excitement in Prague was intense. In the Bethlehem Hus denounced Alexander V. and Zbinek before an immense congregation. In the University Czech masters, following the lead of Hus, were not slack in their sarcasms upon the Archbishop and in their open defence of the books of Wyclif. In the streets Jerome and others taught the working men to sing satirical skits which Wenzel found it needful to prohibit:

Zbinek, Bishop A, B, C,  
Burnt the books, but ne'er knew he  
What was in them written.

The mob, in fact, stirred up by an incautious sermon of Hus, took matters into their own hand. On July 22 they burst into the cathedral and drove forty priests from the altars. In the church of St. Stephen's 'six men with drawn swords tried to slay a blaspheming preacher.' The terror, we learn, 'so overwhelmed all the vicars' that they dared not give effect to the excommunication.

To this year of strife, probably before it had developed into the edict against the books of Wyclif, certainly before the burning and excommunication, we must ascribe the following undated letter, whose strong evangelical feeling will appeal to many. Laun, the Latin name for which is Luna, is a town about sixty kilometres N.W. of Prague. There is a picture of it, much as it was in the days of Hus, in Merian's *Topographia Provinciarum Austriacarum* (Frankfort, 1649).



V. TO THE PEOPLE OF LAUN<sup>1</sup>*(Undated : about 1410)*

Master John Hus, an unworthy servant of God, to the faithful citizens of Laun, grace unto you and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Although, my beloved, I have not seen you with my outward eye, but with that of the spirit, yet I hear of your steadfast faith and love towards God and His gospel, and how our Saviour Himself hath made you as one man in faith, peace, love and the hearing of God's word. Thus your unity and concord above all the other towns of Bohemia hath sunk deeply into my heart. I adjure you, beloved, although unknown to you by face, yet as one devoted in God to your salvation, love one another, stand fast in unity, and suffer no dissensions among yourselves. For it is the unity that comes of a true faith which will preserve you safe unto God. May God in His turn mercifully grant unto you a successful issue that you may overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil!

To this end, beloved, allow no schisms, treacheries, *envies*, *angers*, etc.,<sup>2</sup> to arise in your midst. If any one among you is incorrigible and a sower of discord, reprove him in private as a brother. Take no dispute to a public court, because to both parties it brings hurt in soul, body, and resources. Study to avenge rather the wrongs done to God than those done to yourselves. It is herein, alas! that the whole world goes wrong, because mortals desire rather to avenge their own wrongs than God's. Antichrist above all prepares this way and

<sup>1</sup> Lat. *Lana*,<sup>2</sup> Gal. v. 20, 21.



lays it out broad and fair, chiefly for us priests, who desire the statutes of men to be more carefully kept than the word of God. Why, when a priest, monk, or prelate is guilty of debauchery or adultery, he gets off scot-free! But let him teach anything that is due to individual judgment, and this will be looked into under threat of anathema. In like manner, the secular priests punish no one for disgracing God. But let a man say to them, "Conscript fathers,<sup>1</sup> you are condemning an innocent man" (which frequently happens), then they punish him with the sword for charging his judges with injustice.

However, I trust God that He will deliver you from these evils, so that you may keep His law more jealously than the statutes of men. When you observe that law, no one can harm you. Therefore, beloved, look to these things that are eternal and imperishable. For there are two alternatives, condemnation and life eternal. Condemnation means perpetual fire, darkness, terrible torture and everlasting burning in company with devils. In life eternal there is perfect joy and light, without pain or torture, and there is communion with God Himself and His angels. As St. Paul saith: *Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man* (mark here in its full meaning "of man") *what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.*<sup>2</sup> We shall be blessed when we enjoy that bliss, in which there is perfect love. For there we shall see who is accursed, damned, and reprobate; there will the sins that lie hidden in men's hearts be open to view; there shall we experience such

<sup>1</sup> *Sic.*      <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

joy and comfort as will never be taken from us. If here we have to suffer for Christ's sake, there we shall be blessed. It is through a cross and through afflictions that we are tried, like gold in the fire, by the Builder who formed the world out of nothing. Blessed then shall we be, if we persevere in that which is good, even to the end.

Beloved, knowing that the world is passing to its doom (death is at the door and we shall soon remove hence), make it your chief concern to live righteous and holy lives and renounce your sins. Next, give earnest heed to the things that are heavenly; and, finally, love God with all your heart and put your trust in Him; for He will honour you in His glory for the merits of Jesus Christ and will make you partakers of His kingdom. Amen.

## LETTER VI

IN the September of 1410, before the excitement over the burning of the books had yet cooled down, Hus received a letter from an English Lollard, one Richard Wyche, vicar of Deptford. Wyche's letter is of remarkable interest, not merely as a sign of the close connection at that time existing between the two countries, or because of the answer of Hus, but also because of the interest attaching to Wyche himself. Wyche was one of the many priests who had come under the influence of Wyclif's teaching. Of his earlier years we know little or nothing. Hus, it is true, speaks of him as "the companion of Wyclif in the toils of the gospel," but too much weight should not be attached to a chance phrase by one to whom Wyche was really a stranger. At one time it is possible he had been a monk, for we find in 1399 one of that name in charge of the alien priory of Derehurst, near Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. In the following year we find that Wyche was an ordained priest in the diocese of Hereford. Shortly afterwards he travelled up to Northumberland to preach the gospel, taking with him a companion named

James. After a few sermons he received a summons to appear before Bishop Walter Skirlaw of Durham. He returned from Newcastle, but on arriving at Chester-le-Street the rupture from which he was suffering became so painful that he was forced to hire a horse, leaving his cloak and purse as a pledge at the inn. He arrived at Bishop Auckland on December 7, and was at once flung into prison. A few days later he was brought up for his examination. The bishop suspected, from his inability to produce any authority for preaching outside his diocese, that he was a Lollard, and questioned him closely concerning the sacrament of the altar. His answers proving unsatisfactory, he was sent back to prison. There he was visited by a master from Newcastle, who tried to persuade him to recant, first by offers of promotion, then by threats. "If you don't do as you are told, you will be burnt," said the master. "God's will be done," replied Wyche, and, in spite of arguments and deputations of all sorts, he remained steadfast. In February 1402, Wyche was brought before the bishop and condemned to degradation and imprisonment. So he was once more thrust back into the cell at Auckland, in horrible pain, but with sufficient food. From this prison he wrote a long letter to his friends at Newcastle, urging them to pray that he might persevere to the end, and asking them to send him some sheets of the gospel in red ink. These might be got through to him by means of a priest living near St. Andrew's Auckland. A copy of this letter found its way to Prague, and probably fell under the notice of Hus. Coming to light after many centuries, it has recently been published in the *English Historical Review* (vol. v.).

With the despatch of this letter our knowledge of Wyche once more becomes uncertain. Fourteen propositions were brought against him at his trial; he defended them all by profuse quotations from the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> But he could not resist the pressure brought to bear upon him, and, following the other English Lollards of the time, he recanted, and was made vicar of Deptford, near Greenwich. As the following letter which he wrote to Hus shows, his recantation was not very sincere. His signature, "Wychewitz," which has misled so many historians, is either a deliberate disguise or a Czech confusion of his name.

<sup>1</sup> See *Fascioli Zizaniorum* (Rolls Series), 370-82, 501-5.



## THE LETTER OF RICHARD WYCHE

*(London: September 8, 1410)*

Greeting, and whatsoever can be devised more sweet in the heart of Jesus Christ. My dearly beloved brethren in the Lord, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have the knowledge of the truth, which abideth in you, and through the grace of God shall be with you for evermore.

I rejoiced above measure when our beloved brethren came and gave testimony to us of your truth, how also you walked in the truth. I have heard, brethren, how sharply Antichrist persecutes you in vexing the faithful servants of Christ with diverse and unheard-of afflictions. And surely no marvel if amongst you (as it is so almost all the world over) the law of Christ be grievously impugned, and that red dragon with his many heads, of whom it is spoken in the Apocalypse, have now vomited that great flood out of his mouth whereby he goeth about to swallow up the woman. But the most gracious God will deliver for ever his only and most faithful spouse. Let us therefore comfort ourselves in the Lord our God and in his innumerable goodness, hoping strongly in Him who will not suffer those that love Him to be unmercifully defrauded of any of their purpose, if we, according to our duty, shall love Him with all our heart. For adversity should by no means prevail over us if there were no iniquity reigning in us. Therefore let no tribulation or anguish for Christ's cause discourage us; knowing this for a surety, that whomsoever the Lord vouchsafes to receive to be His children, these he scourgeth; for so the merciful Father wills that they be tried in this miserable life through and in persecutions that afterwards He may spare us. For the gold that this high Artificer hath chosen He purgeth and trieth in this fire, that He may afterwards lay it up in His pure treasury. For we see that the time we shall abide here is short and transitory; the life that we hope for hereafter is blessed and everlasting. Therefore, while we have time, let us strive earnestly that we may enter into that rest. What other things do we see in this frail life save sorrow, heaviness, and sadness, and that which is most grievous of all to the faithful, too much abusing and contempt of the law of the Lord?



Let us therefore endeavour ourselves, as much as we may, to lay hold of the things that are eternal and abiding, despising in our mind all transitory and frail things. Let us consider the holy fellowship of our fathers that have gone before us. Let us consider the saints of the Old and New Testaments. Did they not all pass through this sea of tribulation and persecution? Were not some of them cut in pieces, others stoned, and others slain with the sword? Some of them went about in sheepskins and goatskins, as the apostle to the Hebrews witnesses. Surely they all kept the straight and narrow road, following the steps of Christ, who said: 'He that ministereth unto Me, let him follow Me, and where I am,' etc. Therefore let us also, who have such noble examples given us of the saints that went before us, laying aside as much as in us lies every weight, and the sin which compasseth us about, run forward with patience to the battle that is set before us, fixing our eyes upon the Author of faith, and Jesus the Finisher of the same, who for the joy that was set before Him suffered the cross, despising the shame. Let us call upon Him who suffered much reproach of sinners against Himself, that we be not wearied, fainting in our minds, but that with all our hearts we may pray for help from the Lord, that we may fight against his adversary Antichrist, that we may love His law, that we be not deceitful labourers, but may deal faithfully in all things according as God vouchsafes to give us, and that we may labour diligently in the Lord's cause under hope of an everlasting reward.

Behold therefore, Hus, most dearly beloved brother in Christ, although in face unknown to me, yet not in faith or love (for distance of place cannot separate those whom the love of Christ doth effectually knit together), be comforted in the grace which is given to thee; labour like a good soldier of Jesus Christ; preach; be instant in word and example, and recall as many as thou canst to the way of truth; for the truth of the gospel is not to be kept in silence because of the frivolous censures and thunderbolts of Antichrist. And therefore to the uttermost of thy power strengthen thou and confirm the members of Christ who are weakened by the devil; and if the Most High will vouchsafe it, Antichrist shall shortly come to an end. And there is one thing wherein I do greatly rejoice, that in your realm and in other places God hath stirred up the hearts of some men

that they can gladly suffer for the word of Christ even unto imprisonment, banishment, and death.

Further, beloved brethren, I know not what to write to you, but I confess that I could wish to pour out my whole heart, if thereby I might comfort you in the law of the Lord. Also I salute from the bottom of my heart all the faithful lovers of the law of the Lord, and especially Jacobellus, your coadjutor in the gospel, beseeching that he will put in a petition unto the Lord for me in the universal Church of Jesus Christ. And the God of peace, who hath raised from the dead the Shepherd of the sheep, the mighty Lord Jesus Christ, make you apt in all goodness to do His will, working in you that which may be pleasing in His sight. All your friends salute you who have heard of your constancy. I would desire also to see letters of yours written back to us, for know that they shall comfort us not a little.

At London, on the Nativity of the glorious Virgin, in the year 1410. Your servant, desiring to become a sharer with you in your labours,

RICHARD WYCHEWITZ, most unworthy of priests.<sup>1</sup>

By the same messenger, it is interesting to note, Woksa of Waldstein, a councillor of Prague and intimate friend of Jerome of Prague, also Zdislaw of Wartenberg (a baron of the realm, one of the University friends of Hus, who on August 10 of that year had defended before the University Wyclif's tractate, *De Universalibus*), received letters from the famous Lollard, Sir John Oldcastle. Oldcastle, it would appear, had corresponded at one time with Hus himself, whom he calls 'a priest of Christ,' but the correspondence is now lost. Probably the intermediary in this correspondence would be Zdislaw, who had been in England, knew Oxford well, and may have met with Oldcastle himself.

On the receipt of Wyche's letter, Hus replied as follows:—

## VI. TO MASTER RICHARD OF ENGLAND

(Undated: end of September 1410)

May the peace of Christ abound in your heart by the Holy Spirit given to you, my dear friend in Christ Jesus!

<sup>1</sup> Text in *Mon.* i. 101, Höfler ii. 210-12. Better readings in the first. The above translation is based on Foxe (ed. Pratt), iii. 506, corrected

Your affectionate letter, which *came down from above from the Father of lights*,<sup>1</sup> powerfully kindles the soul of your brothers in Christ. It contains so much sweetness, efficacy, invigoration, and solace, that if every other writing were engulfed in the abyss of Antichrist, it would suffice of itself for the salvation of Christ's faithful ones. Turning over in my mind its marrow and strength, I said in a large assembly of people, numbering, I suppose, nearly ten thousand, as I was preaching in public, "See, my beloved brothers, what a care for your salvation is shown by the faithful preachers of Christ in other countries; they yearn to pour out their whole soul, if only they can keep us in the gospel of Christ, even the Lord." And I added, "Why, our dear brother Richard, partner<sup>2</sup> of Master John Wyclif in the toils of the gospel, hath written you a letter of so much cheer, that if I possessed no other writing, I should feel bound by it to offer myself for the gospel of Christ, even unto death. Yea, and this will I do, with the help of our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ's faithful ones were fired with such ardour by the letter that they begged me to translate it into our mother tongue.<sup>3</sup>

What then I should write to you, dear friend, and the rest of the brothers, I know not. I have no skill to instruct those who are so much more learned than myself. Can I, the weaker, say aught to cheer the stronger in the warfare of Christ? What am I to say? Dear friend, you have anticipated the words of instruction. It only remains for me to

<sup>1</sup> Jas. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> The translation is said still to exist in the Library of Prague.



seek and to seek again the help of your prayers. I am thankful that Bohemia has under the power of Jesus Christ received so much good from the blessed land of England through your labours; and I do not wonder that while *to some it is a savour unto death*, yet to others it is a savour unto joy, because for many *it is a savour unto life eternal*.<sup>1</sup> For *the enemy of man had sown tares*<sup>2</sup> so widely in our kingdom that scarcely a grain or two of wheat appeared. The whole of man's field had been so filled with nettles that the way of salvation could with difficulty be found.

But now *the people which walked in darkness have beheld the great light of Jesus Christ. The light of truth hath appeared to them that dwell in the region of the shadow of death*,<sup>3</sup> and is eagerly welcomed under our Saviour's power by the people, barons, knights, counts, and the common folk. If the community of the saints in England learn of this to its full measure, their hearts will dance for joy: *give praise, O thou barren, that bearest not: sing forth praise, and make a joyful noise, thou that didst not travail with child: for many are the children of the desolate*.<sup>4</sup>

I must tell you, dear brother, that the people will listen to nothing but the Holy Scriptures, especially the gospel and the epistles. Wherever in city or town, in village or castle, the preacher of the holy

<sup>1</sup> P.: *Si aliis odor et mortem sed gaudium, quia multis odor in vitam eternam.* Höfler: *et in mortem.* Read *Si aliis odor ad mortem, sed aliis in gaudium, quia multis*, etc. There is only one MS. From 2 Cor. ii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. ix. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. liv. 1. Inexact. For *deserti* (P.) read *desertæ*.



truth makes his appearance, the people flock together in crowds, despising the clergy who are not able to furnish it. As a result, Satan hath arisen: for now *the tail of Behemoth*<sup>1</sup> himself hath been set in motion, and it remains for the Lord Jesus Christ *to bruise his head*.<sup>2</sup> See, I have but gently touched his tail and he hath opened wide his mouth to swallow me down, and my brothers also. He is raging now. At one time he utters heresy with lying words: at another he fawns. Anon he fans the flame of censure and kindles the torch of a grim fulmination among the dioceses of the neighbouring<sup>3</sup> lands; at home he dare not touch my head. For the hour has not yet come; seeing that the Lord hath not yet, by me and my brothers, snatched from his maw those whom He hath predestined to the life of glory. Therefore He will give courage to the preachers of the gospel that they may wound Behemoth at least in his tail, until his head and all his members be utterly crushed.<sup>4</sup> It is for this we are praying with all our heart: it is for this we are labouring, even as your reverence hath written as only love can write: it is for this that we are bound humbly to endure death and not to fail with the Lord Almighty on our side, seeing that our gracious Lord saith: *I am with him in tribulation, I will deliver him and glorify him*.<sup>5</sup> O holy deliverance and glorification! look for Richard and his brothers, who have now endured many tribulations. Take me up also in my misery that I may be with my brothers who fearlessly confess Thy gospel in the midst of *a wicked and adulterous*

<sup>1</sup> Job xl. 10-12.<sup>2</sup> Gen. iii. 15.<sup>3</sup> P. : *jacantium* H. : *(circum)jacantium*.<sup>4</sup> See *infra*, p. 119, n. 1.<sup>5</sup> Ps. xc. (xci.) 15.

generation.<sup>1</sup> Grant to us help in tribulation: for vain is the salvation of men.<sup>2</sup> May our hope be in Thee!<sup>3</sup> May we be drawn to Thee by the *threefold cord*<sup>4</sup> that cannot be broken: for it hath been woven by the Lord Jesus Christ. May He, dear brother, grant to you and your helpers a life inviolate in glory, that you may be able to live a long while and bring back<sup>5</sup> the straying sheep to the way of truth.

I greatly rejoice with all who love the gospel that you have shown your loving-kindness by giving us healthful counsel. Our Lord the King and all his court, the Queen, barons, and common folk, are on the side of the word of Jesus Christ. The Church of Christ in Bohemia greets the Church of Christ in England, and yearns to share in its confession of the holy faith by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the glorious God be your reward for having ministered to our need by the example of your great labours. May yours be *the peace that passeth all understanding!*<sup>6</sup> Amen.

What became of Wyche we know not for certain. He is usually assumed to have been the same Wyche who many years afterwards was first degraded, then burnt on Tower Hill (August 2, 1439), and to whose tomb, as Foxe tells us, the Londoners made pilgrimage, accounting him a prophet and a holy man. 'So they upreared a great heap of stones and set up a cross there by night.' This Richard Wyche, as we learn from the writ prohibiting the pilgrimages, 'did long since heretically hold, teach, and publicly preach certain heresies in many places, and being judicially convicted did before a judge abjure all heresy generally.' If this Richard Wyche was the same as the author of this letter, he must have been, at the time of his

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Eccles. iv. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cvii. 13. Inexact.

<sup>5</sup> P. : *redire*; read with H. : *reducere*.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxi 8.

<sup>6</sup> Phil. iv, 7.

burning, a very old man—too old, in fact, to have been, as Hus assumes, the actual companion of Wyclif.

We resume our narrative of the events at Prague from the burning of the books of Wyclif to the close of the struggle of Hus and Archbishop Zbinek. As the letter which Hus wrote to Wyche shows, the reformer had found powerful adherents at court. He soon needed their help. On August 25, 1410, Oddo Colonna, the future Martin V., to whom John had handed over the appeal of Hus, decided against him and urged the Archbishop to proceed against the Wyclifists with all severity, 'calling in, if need be, the help of the secular arm.' A vigorous protest was at once made by Wenzel (September 12) and Queen Sophie (September 16), by certain barons of the realm, and by the magistrates of Prague, whose rights in the Bethlehem Chapel were at stake. These protests Wenzel despatched to the Pope by Antonio of Monte Catino, whom John had sent to Prague to notify his accession to the Papacy. Zbinek showed his contempt by at once making the process against Hus absolute (September 24), while on October 1 Colonna cited Hus to Bologna, where the Curia was then resident. Hearing of this intended step, Wenzel and Sophie once more protested. The envoys of Wenzel, John Cardinalis of Reinstein and Dr. Naas, were instructed to obtain from John the release of Hus, 'our faithful and beloved chaplain,' from the personal citation, 'on account of the perils of the road and the danger from Hus's enemies.' The case, they pleaded, should be tried before the University of Prague. At the same time Wenzel gave orders that 'Master Hus, our faithful, devout, and beloved chaplain,' should 'be allowed to preach the word of God in peace.' At Rome the royal interference proved useless; the influence, or rather the gifts, of Zbinek<sup>1</sup> prevailed. Hus had neglected to repair to Bologna in person, sending there instead his proctors, John of Jesenicz and two other theologians. These John flung into prison, while in February 1411 Colonna placed Hus under excommunication. On March 15 this was read in all the churches of Prague, with two exceptions. One of these was the Church of St. Michael's, the vicar of which was Christian Prachaticz. But Hus met the excommunication with defiance.

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, p. 60, n. 2.



Meanwhile in Bohemia the excitement was intense, as Hus owns—'riots, hatreds, and murders.' As Prague still persisted in its writ of sequestration against the property of Zbinek for the burning of the books, the Archbishop retorted by an interdict on the city and surrounding country (May 2, 1411). Prague, following the lead of Hus, treated the matter with indifference. The goods of the priests who obeyed were seized; they themselves cast into prison or banished. Nobles, burghers, and king joined hands in the spoliation of the Church. The Archbishop had already fled, leaving the treasury of the Cathedral to be pillaged by his foes (May 6). By June 18 few priests were left in Prague, save the followers of Hus.

But Wenzel and Zbinek were anxious for peace. Both realised that they had gone too far. Wenzel perceived that the struggle over religion was an injury to his political projects: Pope John on his part was willing to throw over Zbinek if he could win over to his side Sigismund, who showed signs of a reconciliation with Gregory, or save Wenzel from defection. So in June 1411 Stephen Palecz, who seems at this time to have occupied a middle position, conveniently showed cause why the interdict should be removed, 'now that the Archbishop was better informed.' On July 3 the case between the University and the Archbishop was placed in the hands of a court of arbitration, chiefly laymen of the highest rank. At the head of these were two strangers, the Elector Rudolph of Saxony and Stibor, waywode or military governor of Transylvania, who were present in Prague on a mission from Sigismund. With these were associated Wenzel, Patriarch of Antioch, and Conrad Vechta, Bishop of Olmütz. Among the lesser men who were present we mark with interest John of Chlum and Wenzel de Duba. After three days' deliberation the court decided that Zbinek should despatch to the Pope an assurance that there were no heretics in Bohemia, and obtain the removal of all excommunications. The King on his part must restore the Archbishop's property and release the imprisoned clergy. Hus furthered the peace by reading before the University on September 1 a letter to John, in which he declared that he had never forsaken the doctrines of the Church. On the request of Hus and with the consent of the rector, his friend Simon of Tisnow, the letter was stamped with the University seal, and inscribed in its records 'for greater proof of the



same.' Hus further wrote a letter to the cardinals in the same tenor. Both of these letters, which display considerable political adroitness, especially in the sly hint that the origin of all the trouble is Hus's adhesion to the Pisan Council, have been preserved for us, though whether they were ever forwarded appears more than doubtful. The draft of Zbinek's letter also still exists. It states that, 'after making diligent inquisition, I can discover no heresies in Bohemia. The dispute between Hus, the University, and myself has been settled.' This letter certainly was never sent. Fresh disputes broke out which led Zbinek to appeal to Sigismund (September 5). He complained that for five weeks he had lingered at Prague 'at great expense' in the vain hope of an audience with Wenzel. The royal promises were still unfulfilled, the reign of terror still continued, and 'foul lampoons against himself were still circulated.' On his way to the court of Sigismund, Zbinek suddenly died at Pressburg (September 28, 1411). He was succeeded by an old man even weaker than himself, Wenzel's physician, Albik of Unicow (October 29, 1411). The reign of this 'greedy German' was not long. He soon exchanged his difficult post with his suffragan, the Bishop of Olmütz, and retired (February 12, 1413) to a less thorny benefice, the titular bishopric of Kaisarije in Palestine.

With this introduction, the following letters, for the most part full of the strife of the times, will explain themselves :—

## LETTER VII

THE date of this letter is inaccurately given in the one MS. in which it has been preserved as 'A.D. MCCCCXII. Dominica Priscæ'—*i.e.*, January 18, 1413 (N.S.). As Hus was at that time in exile, the date is improbable, while January 18 fell on a Sunday in 1411, not 1413. We therefore date accordingly, reading 'MCCCCX.' (O.S., *i.e.* 1411 N.S.) for 'MCCCCXII.'

The illustrations in this letter, for which see the notes, were probably found by Hus in some one of the many commentaries on the famous Rule of Benedict, perhaps in Benedict Anianensis *Concordia Regularum* (see Migne, vol. ciii. pp. 1058 ff.). For other illustrations of this letter, see Migne, vol. lxi. c. 33.

## VII. TO A CERTAIN MONK

(January 18, 1411)

Greetings and grace from the Lord Jesus Christ! Beloved brother in Christ Jesus, so far as possessions are concerned, it is the foundation-principle of the clergy, and especially of those who have taken vows, to have all things common, in accordance with the passage in Acts ii.: *All things were common unto them.*<sup>1</sup> From this the blessed Augustine took the saying which is laid down in his rule as follows: *These are our instructions to be observed by those who are settled in a monastery.*<sup>2</sup> Also further on: <sup>3</sup> *And you are not to speak of having anything of your own.* Item, Gregory in the third book of the *Dialogues* near the end caused brother Justin, a monk, to be flung on to a dunghill beside his three gold pieces, while the brethren were ordered to say to him, "Thy money perish with thee."<sup>4</sup> Item, St. Benedict in his

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv. 32, and not "Acts ii."

<sup>2</sup> More than one rule for monks is extant attributed to St. Augustine. They are all spurious save that extracted from his 109th letter (Migne, vol. xxxiii. p. 958). Hus here quotes the last words of the preface. For the corrupt reading of the sole MS. in Palacký, read: *Hæc sunt, quæ ut obseruetis, præcipimus in monasterio constituti.*

<sup>3</sup> That is, *Et infra* in Gratian's *Decretum*. See Pars ii. C. 12, q. 1, c. 11, and cp. Augustine (ed. Maur, 1685), vol. x. Sermons Nos. 52 and 53. Compare also Wyclif, *De Civ. Dom.* iii. 81.

<sup>4</sup> This famous tale, related by Gregory himself, will be found in *Dialogues*, iv. 55. There is another account in *The Life of Gregory* by John the Deacon, one of the parties in the *Dialogues* (see *Vita* in Migne, vol. lxxv. lib. i. cc. 15 and 16). The incident took place probably in January 590 shortly before Gregory's election as Pope. It is interesting to note that Hus uses the same illustration in greater fulness in a sermon that he preached in November 1411 (see *Mon.* ii,

rule saith:<sup>1</sup> *Let no one presume to give or receive anything, nor have anything of his own, not a thing, neither manuscript, nor tablets, nor pen,<sup>2</sup> in fact nothing whatever, seeing that neither one's body nor desires are lawfully in one's keeping, but all things are common to all as it stands written: neither did any one say that aught was his own, etc.<sup>3</sup> Item, Basil in his rule saith thus: If any man calleth aught his own, he maketh himself a stranger to the elect of God and to the love of the Lord who fulfilled indeed what He taught in word and laid down His life for His friends.<sup>4</sup> Item, St. John Cassian writing to Pope Castorius<sup>5</sup> concerning the institutes of the holy fathers in the fourth book of his rule, saith thus: Whereas in some monasteries where some loose customs are tolerated we see that the rule is most stringently observed, whereby no one may dare even by a word to call anything his own, and it is a great crime for any*

51b). There the name of the monk is more correctly given as Justus, while the correct reference in the sermon shows that the reading "tertio dialogorum" is a slip.

<sup>1</sup> See Migne, *Patrol. Lat.* vol. lxxvi. c. 33.

<sup>2</sup> P.: *graphum*; read *graphium*, i.e. *γραφειῶν*.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict wrote *dicat*—'let any one say.' Hus reads *dicebat*. The rule, we note, is quoted in Wyclif (*De Civ. Dom.* iii. 85) with *dicebat*. The reading alters the sense to a reference to Acts iv. 32, a mistake into which Wyclif and Hus fell through the preceding "*ut scriptum est*."

<sup>4</sup> See Basil, *Regulæ brevius tractatæ*, Interrog. 85. [*Basil Opera*, ed. Garnier (Paris, 1839), ii. 629.]

<sup>5</sup> Castorius was not a 'Pope,' but a bishop of Apt (d. 426), to whom John Cassian, the founder of the two religious houses for men and women at Marseilles, dedicated his *De Institutis Cœnobiorum*. In the preface Cassian twice calls Castor 'beatissima Papa,' a relic of the time when the title was applied to all bishops and abbots. For the quotation, see *De Instit.* lib. iv. c. 13 (ed. Petschenig, Vienna, 1888 [C.S.E.L.], vol. i. p. 55).



monk to have let slip the words, "my manuscript, my tablets, my pen, my shoes,<sup>1</sup> my cap":<sup>2</sup> let a brother make atonement for this offence by a suitable penance if by any chance through inadvertence or ignorance a word of this kind has escaped his lips. Item, the blessed Francis in his rule laid this down:<sup>3</sup> *The rule and the life of the Brothers Minor is this, to wit, firmly to observe the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and to live without any possession in obedience and chastity.* And further on in the middle of the rule:<sup>4</sup> *Let the brothers appropriate nothing for themselves, neither home, nor place, nor anything; but as pilgrims and strangers in this world and as the Lord's menials in poverty and humility let them go about seeking for alms without fear.* So much for that rule. To the same effect the blessed Jerome writes in his *Ad Heliodorum*.<sup>5</sup> Item, the blessed Bernard in his book addressed to Pope Eugenius.<sup>6</sup> Item, the blessed Augustine in his *De opere monachorum*.<sup>7</sup> Item, St. Thomas in his *Tractatus monachorum*. Item, I have read (but I know not the passage) that the blessed Bernard saith: *A monk who has a farthing is not*

<sup>1</sup> P. : *caligas*. The reading of the original was probably *gallicas*. See Petschenig in *Ed. Cit.*

<sup>2</sup> An addition of Hus or his copy See Petschenig, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wyclif, *De Cir. Dom.* iii. 88. For the rule, see De la Haye, *Francisci Assisiatis Opera* (Paris, 1641, p. 30: from the second rule; compare *op. cit.* p. 30 with p. 23).

<sup>4</sup> De la Haye, *op. cit.* c. 6, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Epistle 14 in Migne, vol. xxii. p. 347.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard's famous *De Consideratione* (Migne, vol. clxxxii.). The reference is vague; for as a matter of fact there is nothing very pertinent to this matter in the *De Consideratione*. A better reference would have been to the *Liber de modo bene vivendi*, c. 48 (in Migne, vol. clxxxiv. p. 1270).

<sup>7</sup> See Migne, vol. xl. p. 547. The reference is not specially apposite.



worth a farthing.<sup>1</sup> Even if none of these mentioned the matter, every monk is bound by his vow. Please send on to me anything you may discover elsewhere to the same effect. Pray remember me to my lord Abbot, and give a hearty welcome to Andrew, the bearer of these presents. If a convenient opportunity occurs, give him a berth for God's sake, so that he may stay on with you. Farewell in Christ.

I write what has occurred to my mind. If I think of anything further I will write later on.

In the year of our Lord 1412 (*sic*) on the Lord's day the feast of Prisca.

### LETTER VIII

JOHN BARBATUS, *alias* Bradáček, or Železna Brada ("Iron Beard") (*infra*, pp. 189, 199, *n.*), to whom this letter is addressed, was a close friend of Hus (*infra*, pp. 182, 185). As his "beard" shows, he was a layman—'a stout rustic,' as an unknown hand has called him in the margin. From the above references we learn that he was at Constance during the trial and death of Hus, of the last scenes of which he has left us a vivid and tender account (*Doc.* 556). He would seem at this time to have been living in Chrumnaw.

Most of the quotations in this letter will be found repeated by Hus in his *De Sex Erroribus*, c. 4, 'De Obedentia' (*Mon.* i. 192*b*), as also in his *De Ecclesia*, c. 19 (*Mon.* i. 238-9). They are a fair specimen of that mediæval show of learning, so common in Hus, which represents little. For the most part, as our notes indicate, they are taken, in the order in which they stand, from one or two pages of Gratian's *Decretum*, a work which Hus used as a quarry of Patristic references. The mediæval conscience in the matter of plagiarism was curiously lax.

<sup>1</sup> Inaccurately quoted from Wyclif, *De Civ. Dom.* iii. 253; cf. Gregory, *Dial.* iii. c. 14, and Wyclif, *De Civ. Dom.* iii. 88.

VIII. TO JOHN BARBATUS AND THE PEOPLE OF  
CHRUMNAW

(May 25, 1411)

Greetings and grace from the Lord Jesus Christ! Beloved, I have heard of your tribulation, but *count it all joy that you fall into divers temptations*<sup>1</sup> to the proving of your constancy. I am now beginning, dear friends, to be tempted, but I count it a joy that for the gospel's sake I am called a heretic and suffer excommunication, as an evildoer and malcontent. However, as a defence unto my joy I recall the life and the words of Christ as well as the words of the apostles. In the fourth of Acts it is narrated how *Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, called the apostles together and forbade them to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.*<sup>2</sup> Again, when the same high priests forbade them to preach, they said in the fifth of Acts: *We ought to obey God rather than men.*<sup>3</sup> In the same book we find heathen, Jews, and heretics saying that God must be obeyed before everything. But alas! it is the followers of Antichrist that are blind to that rule and not the holy apostles and the true disciples of Christ. The blessed Jerome in his Epistle to the Ephesians<sup>4</sup> saith: *If a lord or a prelate issue*

<sup>1</sup> Jas. i. 2.<sup>2</sup> Acts iv. 6-20.<sup>3</sup> Acts v. 29.<sup>4</sup> See Gratian, Pt. ii. C. 11, q. 3, c. 93; quoted also in Wyclif, *De Officio Regis*, 192. Gratian's ascription of it to "Ad Ephesios" is a

commands which are not contrary to the faith, nor opposed to Holy Scripture, the bond-servant is to be subject to him. If, however, he order what is contrary to these, the bond-servant must obey the master of his spirit rather than the master of his body. Further on:<sup>1</sup> if the command of the superior be good, carry out the desires of him that issueth the command: if evil, reply, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Item, Augustine in his sixth homily on the words of God:<sup>2</sup> If the authority order what you ought not to perform, in this case of course despise the authority, fearing the authority that is greater. Consider the grades of human offices. If a procurator hath issued a command, is it to be carried out if it is opposed to a proconsul? Again, if the proconsul himself issue a command and the emperor another, is there any question that the former should be neglected and the latter obeyed? Accordingly, if the emperor order something different from God, one ought to neglect the former and submit to the latter. We therefore resist the authority of devil and man if they suggest anything contrary to God: and in so doing we do not resist the ordinance of God but submit to it. For God hath ordained that in things evil we obey no authority. So far Augustine. To the same effect Gregory saith in the last book of the *Moralia*:<sup>3</sup> It is to be understood that evil must never be wrought through

mistake, probably an original mistake of "Polycarp"—i.e. of the *Collectio Canonum Gregorii Presbyteri*, one of the sources Gratian used. It is really from Jerome's *Ad Titum*, c. 2, vv. 9-10 (in Migne, *Op. Hieron.* vii. 584). Hus had added to Gratian 'vel prælatus.'

<sup>1</sup> *Et infra*, c. 3, § 1. Part of the quotation in Gratian.

<sup>2</sup> Sermo 68 (ed. Maur). Gratian took it from "Polycarp," and Hus is quoting very loosely. See Gratian, Pt. ii. C. 11, q. 3, c. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Greg. *Moralia*, lib. xxxv. c. 14 (ed. Migne, p. 766). Taken by Hus from Gratian, ii. C. 11, q. 3, c. 99.



obedience. Item, the blessed Bernard<sup>1</sup> in a certain epistle saith: *To do evil at the bidding of another is not obedience but disobedience.* Item, the blessed Isidore<sup>2</sup> (and it is found in Cause xi., question 3<sup>3</sup>): *If any one in authority do anything, or order anything to be done apart from the Lord, or commit or command a transgression of Scripture, the opinion of St. Paul is to be brought home to him, to wit, "though we, or an angel from heaven preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema,"*<sup>4</sup> *from which it followeth that if any one prevent you from doing the Lord's bidding, or command what the Lord hath forbidden, let him be accursed to all that love the Lord. It further followeth that if any one in authority state or command anything which is clearly opposed to God's will or the Holy Scriptures, let him be held a false witness of God or guilty of sacrilege.*

From these examples you may see that those who forbid preaching are false witnesses, guilty of sacrilege, and by consequence excommunicated of God, according to the saying of the prophet who pronounces the sentence of excommunication: *Cursed*

<sup>1</sup> P.: *Benedictus*, with the sole MS. But in *Mon. i. 94* the correct reading *Bernardus* is given, as also in Hus, *De Ecclesia* (*Mon. i. 239d*) and *De Sex Erroribus* (*Mon. i. 192b*), where the reference "*In quadam epistola ad Adam monachum*" is added. See Migne, *Op. Bernard*, i. 95 C. This seems to be one of the few original references of Hus, and he was evidently very fond of it. Cf. *Doc. 480*.

<sup>2</sup> So Gratian, *loc. cit.*—to whom for once Hus gives a reference. But the words are really from Basil, *Regulæ brevius tractata*, Interrog. 114, ed. Garnier, ii. 631. At his trial in Constance Hus referred to the authorities here cited, and especially to the passage from Isidore (see *Documenta*, p. 214). Compare also Wyclif, *De Offic. Regis*, 110-11, from which Wyclif may have taken it. Cf. Hus's use of 'satraps' *infra*, p. 50, with comment.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, Gratian, *loc. cit.* c. 101. Copied exactly.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. i. 8.



are they that go back from Thy commands.<sup>1</sup> In reference to my contention Jerome saith to Rusticus, Bishop of Narbonne: <sup>2</sup> *Let none of the bishops henceforth be moved to envy (which is a temptation of the devil) or be angry, if the presbyters occasionally exhort the people or preach in churches, or give their blessing, as hath been said, to the people: for when a man is refusing me these things I should say to him, "He that doth not wish the presbyters to do what is commanded of God should tell us who is greater than Christ."*<sup>3</sup> Item, Bede on this text: <sup>4</sup> *You shall find an ass tied and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me. And if any man shall say anything to you, say ye that the Lord hath need of them; saith: In this passage He mystically instructs doctors not to refrain from preaching, if they meet with opposition or are hindered from loosing sinners from their snares and bringing them to the Lord by confession of the faith. Rather should they constantly be hinting that the Lord hath need of such for the building up of His church. But who could write down all the sayings of the saints which, without exception, teach obedience to God rather than to men? Tyrants set over against these sayings that in Matt. xxiii.: Whatsoever they say to you,*

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxviii. (cxix.) 21. Quoted also in *The Defence of the Articles of Wyclif* (1412), *Mon.* i. 113a.

<sup>2</sup> From Gratian, Pars i. dist. 95, C. 6. Judging by the readings, Hus would seem to have taken it from the *Collectio Canonum* of Anselm of Lucca. The epistle *De Septum gradibus ecclesie* is not by Jerome, though usually attributed to him. This passage is quoted also by Hus in *Mon.* i. 112b, *Defence of the Articles of Wyclif*.

<sup>3</sup> P.: *dicat, quod majus est, Xto*; read with Gratian and Anselm of Lucca: *dicat, quis major est Christo*.

<sup>4</sup> A mere paraphrase of Bede's *In Matt. Evang.* c. xxi. *in loc.* (ed. Cologne, 1612, vol. v. p. 61; also eds. Migne and Giles). Quoted also in *The Defence of the Articles of Wyclif* (*Mon.* i. 112a).

*do.*<sup>1</sup> But they are at once put to confusion by the prohibition which follows: *According to their works, do ye not.*<sup>2</sup> God accordingly in Deut. xxiv. saith: *Thou shalt do whatsoever the priests of the Levitical race shall teach thee, according to what I have commanded them.*<sup>3</sup> Mark, the Lord willeth that the obedient man should only obey His commands. Also this passage in First Peter, chapter ii.: *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear. Further on, it saith: also to the froward;*<sup>4</sup> inasmuch as<sup>5</sup> a man would no more think of obeying the froward than of obeying the devil.<sup>6</sup> Therefore both the will of God and Scripture teach that we only ought to obey our superiors in things lawful.

I based my case on these principles, when I preferred in the matter of preaching to obey God rather than the Pope, and the Archbishop and his other satraps<sup>7</sup> who act contrary to this word of Christ's: *Go ye into the whole world, etc.*<sup>8</sup> I put my signature to this, that you may know how to meet the devil's dogs.<sup>9</sup>

Monday, Urban's Day, in Rogation week.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxiv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> P.: *sed absit*; read with Mon.: *quod absit*.

<sup>6</sup> Hus had forgotten for the moment the retort that might have been made from Wyclif's famous *Deus debet obedire diabolo*, with which he must have been familiar as early as 1403.

<sup>7</sup> 'Satraps' is a favourite word with Wyclif for the higher clergy; cf. *Dialogues* 25 l. 20; 32 l. 22; 113 l. 33; *Cruciata* (*Polem. Wks.* ii. 620) *et passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>9</sup> *Diaboli canibus*—possibly some pun intended on *Dominicani*, as often in the writings of the times.

IX. TO JOHN XXIII., THE ROMAN PONTIFF<sup>1</sup>

(September 1, 1411)

With the proper obedience to be rendered to the Church of Jesus Christ and His supreme pontiff.

Seeing that I am always ready to give an answer to the satisfaction of every man who asks concerning the faith I hold, I declare with a sincere heart that the Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man; and that His whole gospel is established so firmly in the truth that *not a jot nor tittle*<sup>2</sup> of it can fail; and finally that His Holy Church hath been so firmly founded on a firm rock that *the gates of hell cannot in any wise prevail against it*.<sup>3</sup> I am ready in hope of the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself the Head, to bear the punishment of a dreadful death rather than to state by private judgment<sup>4</sup> aught else than His truth, or to declare what would be contrary to the will of Christ and His Church. For these reasons I confidently, truthfully, and steadfastly assert that I have been wrongfully defamed to the Apostolic Seat by those heresy hunters.<sup>5</sup> If they have given or are giving information that I taught the people that in the sacrament the material substance of the bread remains, it is a falsehood.<sup>6</sup> It is a falsehood that I have said that when the host is elevated it is then the body of Christ, but when it is laid down it is not. It is a falsehood that a priest in mortal sin cannot consecrate. It is a falsehood that the lords may withdraw temporal goods from the clergy and

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, pp. 40-41.<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 18.<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvi. 18; loose.<sup>4</sup> *Elective*.<sup>5</sup> *amuli veritatis*.<sup>6</sup> With the exception of this first point, Hus soon moved very far away from the positions which he here takes up.



that they need not pay tithes. It is a falsehood that indulgences are nothing. It is a falsehood that I have urged an actual attack on the clergy with the sword. It is a falsehood that I have preached or held any error or errors whatsoever or any heresy: or that I have seduced the people in any wise from the way of truth. It is a falsehood that I was the cause of certain German masters being expelled from Prague. As a matter of fact, they themselves were unwilling to enjoy the privileges of the foundation of the noble<sup>1</sup> University of Prague and declined to obey the lawful behests of the most serene prince and lord, Wenzel, King of the Romans, Emperor,<sup>2</sup> and King of Bohemia: and supposing that the University of Prague would be unable to exist without their presence, they retired of their own free will to their own homes or wherever they pleased.<sup>3</sup> Yet I admit that I appealed from the opinion of the very reverend father in Christ, my lord Zbinek, to the Apostolic Seat, and finally from the suits instituted on malicious information by the holy Apostolic See. For those who were jealous of the truth, forgetting their own honour and salvation, maliciously suggested to the Apostolic Seat that in the kingdom of Bohemia, in the city of Prague, and in the marchionate of Moravia, errors and heresies were sprouting up and had affected the hearts of many to such an

<sup>1</sup> *Alma.*

<sup>2</sup> *Semper Augustus.* Wenzel had been deposed August 20, 1400. As he had never been crowned, he was never, strictly speaking, "Emperor" (*Imperator*). On July 21, 1411, Sigismund, his half-brother, had been unanimously elected King of the Romans. Wenzel had been won over by the promise that Sigismund would not during his lifetime seek the higher title.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 18.



extent that owing to the great number that had been infected by such errors it was necessary that a remedy by way of correction should be applied. Finally, they falsely suggested that the Bethlehem chapel was a private place, although it had been established by the ordinary as a parish living,<sup>1</sup> while its destruction would impair in some sense God's honour among the people, would thwart their spiritual progress, cause scandal, and greatly incense the people against its destroyers. Nevertheless, when summoned in person to the Roman Curia, I longed humbly to put in my appearance; but because plots on my life were formed against me both within the kingdom and outside, especially by the Germans,<sup>2</sup> I judged, on the advice of many friends, that it would be tempting God to risk my life when the interests of the Church did not demand it. Consequently I did not appear in person, but appointed advocates and proctors,<sup>3</sup> desiring to obey the holy Apostolic See. On this account, Supreme Vicar of Christ, I humbly entreat the kindness of your Holiness that it may please you, for the mercy of Almighty God, graciously to exempt me from appearing in person and from the other obligations involved therein, on the ground that I am now in complete agreement with the aforesaid reverend father in Christ.<sup>4</sup> The witnesses to this are the most serene prince and lord, Wenzel, King of the Romans and Bohemia, also the very reverend fathers and illustrious princes, Wenzel, Patriarch of Antioch;<sup>5</sup> my lord Conrad, Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> By Gregory XII., at Lucca, May 15, 1408, in a rescript to Zbinek.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 39.      <sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 39.      <sup>4</sup> *I.e.*, Zbinek.

<sup>5</sup> Wenzel Kralik, Dean of St. Peter's, Wyschehrad, was appointed Patriarch of Antioch (*in partibus*), April 11, 1397. In 1413 he was

Olmütz; the illustrious Prince Rudolph, Duke of Saxony, Elector of the Holy Empire; the other princes, barons, and lords, and the most noble lord Stibor, ambassador of the most illustrious prince and lord, Sigismund, King of Hungary. For I offered to reply to each and all of the charges brought against me, even submitting myself to the hearing of the whole of them, and expressing my willingness, in case anything should be proved against me, to amend my errors by the punishment of fire, unless I should yield therein. And I am prepared to-day to face the whole University of Prague and an assembly of all the prelates and to give an answer to any charges, if any one can be found to bring them forward. But no one so far is willing to take sides against me, as being liable to retaliation, according to the canon laws.<sup>1</sup> Written at Prague with my own hand on St. Giles's Day.

MASTER JOHN HUS,  
the least of the priests of your Holiness.

#### X. TO THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS

*(Without date: early in September 1411)*

Your humble servant in your commands with all reverence!

Most reverend fathers in Christ, who bear the likeness of the apostles: whereas you have been placed as chief luminaries to enlighten each quarter of the appointed administrator of the diocese of Olmütz on the transference of Conrad Vechta to Prague, and is reckoned among its bishops. He died on September 12, 1416, and must not be confused with the French Patriarch of Antioch (Cramaud) who played so prominent a part at Constance. See Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica*, s. v.

<sup>1</sup> See Gratian, Pt. ii. C. 2, q. 3, from the Pseudo-Isidore decretals.

world, and whereas you have been placed in authority to take away the world's crimes, to deliver souls from Satan's jaws, and in Christ's name to help the oppressed, I humbly flee to your protection, most reverend fathers, and fall at your feet. I am unable to bear the heavy burden that hath fallen upon your poor servant, and which I first brought upon myself at the time of the schism from Gregory XII. For then I strongly urged upon the princes, barons, and lords, in the interests of the unity of the Holy Mother Church, the duty of loyalty to the sacred College of Cardinals, and I steadfastly preached the same to clergy and people. Thereupon the very reverend father in Christ, Lord Zbinek, Archbishop of Prague, then the opponent of the sacred College of Cardinals, in a public notice affixed to the church doors and signed by himself, prohibited all the masters of the University of Prague who had sided with the College of Cardinals, and in particular myself, whom he named, from exercising all and sundry priestly functions in his diocese, alleging as a cause that the masters of the University of Prague, acting on wrong information, had withdrawn from the most holy father in Christ, Gregory XII., and from obedience to the Apostolic Seat. But as the issue proves the deed, it afterwards came out that at the close of the Council of Pisa he approved, under compulsion, by his own act, the secession of the masters.<sup>1</sup> Here, then, is the primal source of the indictment and charge which have been laid against me! But seeing that the aforesaid sacred College of Cardinals pledged itself at that time to bestow many benefits on its supporters, I therefore recall the promise then made;

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, from Gregory. The reference is not to Leipzig.



and believing that it still holds good as a promise made by the pillars of the Church, I appeal on my bended knees to the kindness of your reverences that it may please you to give pious regard to a poor man like myself, and with your gracious assistance exempt me from the burden of a personal appearance and the other charges that are hanging upon such appearance.<sup>1</sup> For I am innocent on those counts which my adversaries bring against me, the Lord Jesus Christ being my witness. I am prepared to face the noble University of Prague and all the prelates and all the people who have heard me, and to whom I now appeal: yea, and to give a full and clear account of the faith which I hold in my heart and profess by word and writing, even if the stake be lighted as I am heard.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the above confession, the public instruments, together with the formal declaration of the University of Prague, will fully inform your most gracious reverences. Written, etc. (*sic*).

<sup>1</sup> *Comparitionum dependentibus gravaminibus*—a compressed way of putting the negative, “the lack of such appearance when cited.”

<sup>2</sup> We may own with Palacký and Stephen of Dolein (*Antihussus*, p. 383 in Pez.; *Thesaurus*, vol. iv. part ii.), that Hus was a little too fond of these professions of willingness to die. See pp. 96, 119, and cf. *Mon.* i. 106a.



## Part II.—From the Death of Zbinek to the Exile of Hus

(September 1411—September 1412)

THE death of Zbinek was not the end of strife, only its transference to new spheres. Henceforth for Hus there was no peace; but the constant struggle was not altogether the fault of his foes. In September 1411 Hus was engaged in a controversy with the Englishman, John Stokes, in defence of Wyclif. As, however, *The Letters of Hus* make no reference to this interesting if one-sided tournament, we pass it by (see *Age of Hus*, pp. 158 ff.).

In the autumn of this year we mark the commencement of the activity of Michael the Pleader. Michael Smradař of Deutsch Brod was at this time priest of St. Adalbert's, Prague. Soon afterwards he entered the King's service with a project for a reformed method of extracting gold from the diggings at Jilowy. According to his enemies, a tale endorsed by Mladenowic, he absconded with a part of the money; more probably, on achieving nothing, he deemed it wise to retire. He returned with the office of papal 'procurator de causis fidei,' whence the name Michael de Causis, or the Pleader, by which he is usually known. His attack upon Hus came about in this wise. In the spring of 1411 Hus, who had once more been appointed the special preacher before the Synod, dared to defend in a sermon, by quotations from Wyclif's *De Officio Regis*—to which for once he acknowledged his indebtedness—the harsh measures that Wenzel had taken against the clergy who sided with Zbinek. In a sermon to the people on All Saints' Eve, he again denounced the vices, especially the avarice, of the priests, singling out certain scandals connected with masses for the dead. The clergy, led on by Michael, retorted by a lawsuit, to which Hus refers in the following appeal (*infra*, p. 59). We see how powerless at this time the clerical party were to restrain the Reformer in the *Contra Occultum Adversarium* (*Mon.* i. 135-43), a tract which Hus finished on

February 10, 1412, and of which we shall hear again at Constance. In one of his sermons to the people, undaunted by the lawsuit of Michael, Hus had again dwelt on the vices of the clergy. 'Immediately after dinner' he had been answered from the pulpit by some one whose name Hus does not give us. In his reply to this unknown disputant, Hus maintained the right of the secular authorities to control and correct scandalous priests, a matter which Rome always regarded with the utmost jealousy. He further defended his constant attacks upon the lives of the clergy from the charge that by this means he was destroying their order and honour. About this time, certainly before the outbreak of the dispute over indulgences in the May of 1412, Hus was also engaged in a controversy with a certain preacher of Pilsen (*Replica contra Prædicatorem Plznensem*, *Mon.* i. 144-8), of whose views Hus speaks at length in the latter part of Letter XII.

The following *Appeal to the Supreme Court of Bohemia* is without date. According to a marginal note in the MS. it was written 'shortly before Christmas MCCCCXII,' a mistake for 1411. It is characteristic of Hus's intense nationalism that it should have been written in Czech; a mark also of the practical drift of his reformation that he should dwell so strongly upon the duty of preaching. In part, of course, this last was an answer to the attempt of his enemies to silence him because of his excommunication.

## XI. TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE KINGDOM OF BOHEMIA

(*Undated: December 1411*)

To the noble lords and magistrates of the Kingdom of Bohemia, and to the other lords now at Prague.

May it please the Lord God in His mercy to grant unto you furtherance in every good thing! Dear lords, heirs of the sacred kingdom of Bohemia, I render thanks before your graces to my most gracious lord, King Wenzel, King of the Romans and of Bohemia, for his kind offices in having enabled me to

continue the preaching of God's word and to persevere in the truth that I love: for having brought about a reconciliation between Zbinek, priest and Archbishop of Prague, of sacred memory, and myself and the other masters, together with the princes, barons, and their advisers: and further for having given a decision in our behalf of which your graces will hear in detail.<sup>1</sup> In defiance of this decision the clergy of the chapter of Prague have commissioned Michael, parish priest of St. Adalbert's, to bring a lawsuit against me, and accordingly have drawn up against me an edict of excommunication. Of this, lest souls be offended, I am not afraid, but I am willingly and cheerfully enduring it. Yet am I grieved at this, that they are not preaching God's word; for I would not have the sacred offices interrupted and God's people distressed. Even granting, beloved lords, that the chief blame rests on my shoulders, consider whether on that account it is right for the praise of the Lord God to be curtailed, and God's people to be distressed by interdicts of this kind, and by the interruption of their religious duties. They have no warrant in the Holy Scriptures for interrupting worship whenever they like. They oppress and trouble the princes, barons, knights, and nobles, as well as the poor people, and summon them to take their trial outside the land,<sup>2</sup> which is contrary to divine law and to the institutes of canon and civil law.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, beloved lords and

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the decision of July 6; see *supra*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to his own citation; *supra*, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> This is not correct. Properly by civil law a man's judge was the judge ordinary of the defendant's domicile. But Rome was regarded as the common domicile or fatherland of all men, and the Pope, therefore, as legally their ordinary. See Gratian, Pt. ii. C. 9, q. 3, c. 17.



heirs of the kingdom of Bohemia, strive to put an end to such calamities and to secure freedom for preaching God's word to the people. As for myself, I am willing to stand my trial; indeed, I have always been ready to do so, and actually appeared before priest Zbinek, of sacred memory, and his assessors, until at the instigation of the cathedral and parochial clergy of Prague he began to take the side of my enemies and managed to get me summoned to Rome for judgment. However, I wish to stand my trial before all the masters and prelates, and before your graces. I will gladly listen to the charges brought against me, plead my cause, and submit myself to judgment, as becomes a poor priest, provided that the person who is to charge me comes forward. Invariably I offered to do this, and his Majesty granted them this request; but not a charge was ever brought against me, except my alleged disobedience. I am indeed aware that I refuse to obey either Pope or Archbishop when they forbid my preaching, for to cease preaching would be contrary to the will of God and my salvation. But I know, beloved lords, that even you do not obey the command which the late Pope<sup>1</sup> gave in the bull which was bought by them at a great price—viz., that there should be no preaching anywhere in chapels. Many of you have chapels in which there is preaching, and occasionally you have it in your own castles as well. I did not betake myself to the Pope's Curia, for I had my proctors, whom they threw into prison,<sup>2</sup> though

<sup>1</sup> Alexander V. ; see *supra*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 53. The following passage from one of the Czech treatises of Hus will illustrate this letter. Hus tells us that when his proctors arrived in Rome they could obtain no hearing, though it should have been given to 'pagan, Jew, heretic, and the devil



absolutely guiltless, men who would go through fire to face any one desirous of convicting me of heresy. However, I did not start on the journey, because plots were everywhere being laid against my life, so as to prevent my return to Bohemia. I trust, therefore, that your graces, along with their Majesties the King and Queen, will carry out the instructions which it shall please Almighty God to give you for the welfare of your kingdom. May He strengthen you in His grace! Amen.

## XII. TO THE PEOPLE OF PILSEN<sup>1</sup>

(Undated: March (?) 1412)

To the good—perseverance in virtue; and to the evil—a holy knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Dear lords and brothers in God's grace, I hear to my great grief that there is a difference and dissension among you concerning divine truth, and that you who began well are doing badly, vexing God, losing your souls, showing a bad example to others, flinging away your integrity, and for the

himself if he had come with the request.' First one commission of cardinals was appointed who 'obtained beautiful horses, silver cups, and precious rings from his adversaries. Then the Pope transferred the matter to others, and the same thing happened again. Of the latter commission some are dead, some in the prisons of Ladislaus. Then the Pope himself took up the matter, saying that he wished to decide it himself. "All men," he added, "have got something from the case, but I have nothing." But when my advocates pleaded for a hearing he refused, and asked for "yellow knights," of which Goose had had none, nor would he have given them if he had possessed them. So the Pope, wanting to get these "knights" (a gold coin), ordered my proctors to be thrown into prison' (*Doc.* 726; cf. *Mon.* i. 235, 332, and *Doc.* 191).

<sup>1</sup> Written in Czech; see *supra*, p. 58, for the circumstances.

insignificant gain of this world are holding of small moment the life eternal. Why do you not recall our Saviour's words: *What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world but suffer the loss of his soul? and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*<sup>1</sup> Why do you not recall that you were a good example to all Bohemia by your goodly concord, your attention to God's word; and the restraint you exercised over a wrong spirit? Oh! how strangely you have forgotten that it was your holy union in that which is good that defended you from your enemies, enriched you, and marked you out before God and man! The devil, God's enemy, saw this, and took it so much to heart that he aroused the members of Antichrist and himself to drive divine grace and goodwill out of you. *And now the unclean spirit has returned to the house from which he had been driven out. Taking seven spirits more wicked than himself, he has come back; and the last state is made worse than the first.*<sup>2</sup> He hath swept out of you the divine word, and restored to you frivolities, gambling, and other sins! Where is the Shepherd of your souls? How does He guide you? Your wound hath not been pointed out. There is none to have pity on you, *to pour in oil and wine and to bind up the wound*<sup>3</sup> inflicted on you by the thieves. Methinks you are attended by those who administer poison to you by making light of Holy Writ, and who pour in the oil, not of true love, but of flattery. You do not understand that the smooth-tongued flatterer is an enemy, while he that chastises is a lover and a healer of wounds, although the sick man is angry and murmurs at the chastisement. O holy Gregory! great Pope, thou sayest: *He alone shall*

<sup>1</sup> Mark viii. 36-7.<sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 24-6.<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 34.

*be my friend, who shall cleanse away my soul's impurity.*<sup>1</sup>

Dear saint, pray for the people of Pilsen, that in this matter they may be imitators of you; and then, as of old, they will spread abroad God's word, will love sermons preached against sins, will embrace their true leaders and reject ravening wolves. Then they will perceive that he who chastises leads them to God, while the flatterer separates them from God, and that while the flatterer nourishes with poison, the chastiser restores with wine. They will remember that they are soon to die, and that he who dies well will be in bliss, while the wretch that has defiled himself will fall into eternal fire.

O beloved followers of Christ! you know that *a good name is better than precious ointment.*<sup>2</sup> What are you doing with your good name, which used to be of this kind: "The people of Pilsen are above all peaceable, administer their municipality aright, love God's word, drive out priest's paramours and procurers, have put down gambling, and show a good example to other cities." Faithfully had God cared for you and had sown wheat among you, but the devil scattered tares,<sup>3</sup> so that the wheat was choked. Oh! in the name of the dear Lord God, in the name of His shameful and cruel martyrdom, in the name of your salvation, your honour, the correction of others and your own happiness, return, you that have strayed, return to the truth. You that are holy, become more holy still! For the Lord God saith: *The time is at hand: he that hurteth, let him hurt still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is just, let him be justified still: and he that is holy, let him be*

<sup>1</sup> I have not discovered this passage

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. vii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xiii. 39.



*sanctified. Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me to render to every man according to his works.*<sup>1</sup> Thus saith the Lord Jesus. If you willingly receive and keep His word, He will give you as your reward eternal life and boundless joy; but if you do not receive it nor keep it, He will give you eternal damnation in eternal fire and in darkness among the devils, where there will be neither rest nor consolation. But I have confidence in His holy grace and cherish the hope (and that is why I write to you) that the good among you may persevere, and the rest may welcome you in all honour, become good fruit and be the sons of God, citizens of that city where there shall be no darkness nor sorrow, where you will behold God your Father and understand all things, and you will each love one another perfectly as your own self, and have the desire of your heart. May it please the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to help you to attain unto that city, when you depart from Pilsen and its strifes, through the death of Christ and the aid of the Virgin Mary and all the saints. Amen.

After writing the above a letter reached me with the news that the priests were preventing the Holy Scriptures from being read in the mother tongue, Czech or German. Secondly, that a certain priest had said in a sermon<sup>2</sup> that no person, though he be guilty of a mortal sin, is a servant or son of the devil. Thirdly, that this priest had said in a sermon at a priest's first mass that up to the time of the actual celebration he was a son of God; but from

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Replica contra Prædicatorem Plznensem* (Mon. i. 144). The arguments of this letter are expanded by Hus in that tract.



that moment, and in future when about to celebrate, he was the father of God and the creator of the Divine Body. Fourthly, that this same priest had said in his sermon that the worst priest was better than the best layman. If this is so, and these errors meet with no opposition from any one, it is a clear sign that you have wandered very far from the truth, especially those of you who have been instructed and are in possession of your reason. For, as St. John Chrysostom<sup>1</sup> saith in a gloss on these words of Christ, "*Fear ye not them that kill the body*":<sup>2</sup> *Christ hath shown by these words that not only is that man a traitor to the truth who speaks the truth fearfully; but he also is a traitor to the truth who doth not sincerely defend it as it ought to be defended. For as a priest ought boldly to preach the truth which he hath heard from God, so a layman also, that is, a person who is not a priest, ought confidently to defend the truth, which he hath heard expounded from Holy Writ by a priest. If he doth not so defend, then he betrays the truth.* This then is the great saint's argument from Christ's words, *Fear ye not*, etc.—namely, that every man, be he priest or no, who knows the truth ought to defend it to the death; otherwise he is a traitor to the truth and to Christ as well.

Now, many of you know the truth and are aware that any man can recite, declare and, if a scholar, read the holy gospel either in Latin, as St. Mark wrote it; or in Hebrew, as St. Matthew composed his

<sup>1</sup> Gratian, Pt. ii. C. 11, q. 3, c. 86; loosely quoted. Really from the anonymous *Auctor Operis Imperfecti in Matt. hom.* 25, a favourite work with Gratian, Hus, and Wyclif, invariably attributed in the Middle Ages to Chrysostom. Cf. p. 12, n.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 28.

version; or in Syriac, as St. Luke composed his; or in Persian, as St. Simon preached and composed his; or in Aramaic,<sup>1</sup> as St. Bartholomew wrote;<sup>2</sup> and likewise in other languages. How, then, can you suffer the priests to prevent people reading the holy gospel in Czech or German? Then as to the second point, are you ignorant of the fact that it is impossible for a man to serve both God in virtue and the devil in sin? I know you have heard Christ's words: *No man can serve two masters*; <sup>3</sup> and again: *You cannot serve God and mammon*. You know also that St. Peter saith: *By whom a man is overcome, of the same also he is the slave*.<sup>4</sup> Christ also saith: *Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*.<sup>5</sup> St. Paul also writes to the Romans: *You were the servants of sin*.<sup>6</sup> Why, then, knowing as you do these testimonies of Scripture, do you suffer a priest to preach that no one, though he be living in mortal sin, is a servant of the devil? I know also that you have heard the words of the Lord Jesus that the tares are wicked sons which the devil hath sown in the world;<sup>7</sup> also those which He addressed to evil men: *Ye are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do*,<sup>8</sup> and He brings forward the cause in these words: *Because you cannot hear my word, therefore are ye of your father the devil*.<sup>9</sup> St. John the Apostle also

<sup>1</sup> *Judaice*.

<sup>2</sup> See the tale of Eusebius (*H.E.* v. 10) of a certain Pantænus of Alexandria who went to preach the gospel to the Indians and found that the apostle Bartholomew had left them St. Matthew's gospel written in Hebrew characters. Hus repeats this argument in his *De Arguendo Clero* (*Mon.* i. 150a), which, possibly, was written at this time, and not as is usually assumed, in 1408.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. vi. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Rom vi. 17.

<sup>5</sup> John viii. 44.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xiii. 38-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.* viii. 43.

<sup>9</sup> John viii. 34.

by the Holy Spirit saith: *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth justice, is just as Christ is just: but he that committeth sin, is of the devil.* Afterwards he saith: *In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever is not just, is not of God.*<sup>1</sup> You see, therefore, that any one who commits a sin unto death, is of the devil and a son of the devil. Why, then, do you suffer a heresy to be preached contrary to these holy sayings of Christ? Be assured that a man who preaches thus is a servant and son of the devil and is worse than the humblest layman that is good. Nor is that priest the father of God; for God would then be the son of this priest; and yet this priest is a son of the devil. God, therefore, would be a son of the devil also! Nor, again, is a priest who preaches and holds this error a creator of the Divine Body; but he is the author of a great heresy. Granted that with the help of all his associates he procreate a nit, then I will admit that they are creators! It is an impossibility, though it were tedious to prove it in this letter. O brave Christians! are you all dead that you allow errors to be bandied about and God's word driven into a corner? Scorn them, and let not the devil rule over you. May the Lord God herein be your Helper, who alone can be, and is, Creator. Amen.

Within a few weeks of writing this letter to the people of Pilsen, Hus became involved in a controversy of wider import. On September 9, 1411, and again on December 2, John XXIII., in the throes of his struggle with Ladislaus, the King of Naples, and Gregory XII., issued bulls preaching a crusade against his foes. The same indulgences were offered as for a campaign in Palestine to all those who should take up arms, or who bought

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 7-8, 10, Czech.



'suitable men' to fight for them. As with the later Tetzel, the indulgences, no doubt, were duly qualified with the usual limitations, which not only Hus, but the Council of Constance, in their attack upon John seem to have overlooked. In theory they were restricted to the 'truly penitent.' In practice, for men do not sin in Latin, John's indulgences were regarded as the selling permission to sin, or the buying of pardon for past transgressions. In some cases priests of no conscience and evil life used the opportunity to wring out in the confessional money and profit for themselves, a practice which Archbishop Albik tried to check.

In the May of 1412, Master Wenzel Tiem, Dean of Passau, who in the previous December had been appointed agent for the dioceses of Salzburg, Magdeburg, and Bohemia, arrived in Prague and opened his sale. The traffic was soon in full swing, money chests set up in the Cathedral, the Teyn Church, and the Wyschehrad, middlemen doing a good trade for country parishes, where payments were often made in kind. Hus, like Luther—who himself points out the similarity of their circumstances—at once entered the lists. For neither Luther nor Hus seems to have recognised how old the custom was. Hus looked upon it as a complete innovation, and forgot his own early experiences. He placarded church doors with his theses, and thundered against 'Antichrist' in the Bethlehem Chapel, and among 'the artists' of the University. As 'the German vicars had received the bull and read it aloud' in their churches, the Czechs at once rallied to the cause of Hus, and the national feud was revived in a new form.

In his proceedings against the indulgences, Hus seems to have been from the first more conscious of his opposition to the authorities than was Luther. News of the coming sale had already driven him to the bold step of answering publicly in the Bethlehem Chapel, in a legal deed drawn up by a notary—'because people are come to give greater credence to such a document'—three questions that had been sent to him (March 3, 1412). The questions and the answers of Hus go to the root of the controversy: 'Whether a man must believe in the Pope, and whether it is possible that a man can be saved who does not really confess to a priest.' As regards the first, Hus appears at this time repeatedly to have preached that 'we can well be saved without a Pope.' We see the same spirit of conscious opposition, so different from the early movement in Germany,



in the account Hus has given us of an interview he had with Wenzel Tiem shortly after the latter arrived at Prague. 'I know well,' he writes, 'the difference between the apostolic commands and the commands of the Pope. So when I was asked by the legates of John, in the presence of Archbishop Albik, whether I were willing to obey the apostolic commands, I answered: "I desire with all my heart to obey the apostolic commands." Thereupon the legates, holding apostolic and papal commands to be interchangeable, thought that I was willing to preach to the people the crusade against Ladislaus. So the legates said: "He is willing you see, lord Archbishop, to obey the commands of our sovereign Pope." So I said to them: "Sirs, understand me. I said that I am willing with all my heart to obey apostolic commands, but by apostolic commands I mean the doctrines of the apostles of Christ. So far as the commands of the Pope agree with the commands and doctrines of the apostles, and are after the rule of the law of Christ, so far I am heartily prepared to render them obedience. But if I see anything in them at variance with this, I will not obey, even if you kindle the fire for the burning of my body before my eyes."'

In this spirit, on June 7, 1412, in spite of the opposition of the eight doctors of the theological faculty, led by 'the friend of his youth,' Stephen Palecz, Hus delivered his disputation against indulgences in the large hall of the University. This was his answer to what he called the determination of the friars to proclaim that 'the Pope is a God on earth.' His arguments, though aptly applied to the disputes of Gregory and John, need not detain us. When not copied from Gratian they are adopted, as Loserth has shown, with verbal fidelity from three tractates of Wyclif, a circumstance which the doctors were not slow to point out in their reply.

The counterblast of the theological faculty was soon forthcoming. Once more they condemned the forty-five articles of Wyclif, and, with the sanction of Wenzel, in whose presence the articles were read (July 10), forbade their teaching in Bohemia under penalty of expulsion. To these they now added six propositions from Hus. Hus had previously challenged their judgment as regards two of the condemned articles in a dissertation, again taken, word for word, from Wyclif. The two articles were those which touched him closest, for they dealt with the duty and right of preaching, a subject in which, as his *Letters* show,

he was always intensely interested. He followed this up by a *Defence of Disendowment (De Ablatione Temporalium a Clericis)*, of which we shall hear at Constance. This treatise was taken in the main from Wyclif's *De Ecclesia*. A third tractate in the same year, nominally on *Tithes*, contains an uncompromising defence of the weakest point of Wyclif's system. This was the doctrine of dominion founded on grace, the assertion that office, whether civil or spiritual, lapsed with mortal sin. Hus had moved far since his letter of the previous year to John.

Three days after his dispute in the Carolinum with the theological faculty over the indulgences, Hus wrote the following interesting letter to the King of Poland. The letter not only breathes intense hatred of the whole system and its abuses, but is also an illustration of how far-reaching was the influence of Hus. The Slav races, as the clergy complained, 'through Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, and Moravia' rallied to a cause which was almost as much national as religious.

Ladislaus (Jagiello), to whom the letter was addressed, is an interesting character. Originally he was the semi-savage chief of Lithuania, a state at that time at the height of its power, holding possession even of many Russian cities. His mother was a Christian, but Ladislaus himself grew up a pagan. But he was quite willing to turn Christian to secure his marriage with Jadwiga (Hedwig), the heiress of Poland. On his marriage and baptism (1386) he took the name of Ladislaus (Wadyslaw) and transferred his capital from Wilno (Vilna) to Cracow. This step, together with their compulsory conversion to the religion of their Prince, displeased the Lithuanians; but after a short struggle the combined forces of Lithuania and Poland were turned against the Teutonic Knights, whom they overthrew in the disastrous battle of Tannenberg, in Prussia (July 15, 1410). Jagiello was thus looked upon by all Slavs as their champion against the encroachments of the Germans, and probably ranked high on this account in Hus's thoughts. Hus would also remember that in 1397 Jadwiga had established a college at Prague for poor students from Lithuania. It was one of the grievances of the Czechs that this college had become filled with Germans. Jagiello, though on his marriage he could neither read nor write, yet showed his interest in learning by founding in 1397-1400 a University at Cracow. So successful was his rule that on the death of Jadwiga (1399), though in reality his rights to the crown of Poland had lapsed,

the Poles continued him in his position. Like all Lithuanians, he was opposed to the claims of Rome, or any attempts to make mischief in Lithuania by ousting on her behalf the Orthodox Church. This sense of opposition would form a further link between Hus and himself. We must also remember that shortly before this date Jerome of Prague had visited Lithuania, and after allowing his beard to grow—a little matter that was never forgiven—had preached before its duke, Witold, Jagiello's cousin. Jagiello, after a most successful reign, died in 1434, and is buried in the Cathedral of Cracow, surrounded by the successors in the dynasty he founded.

### XIII. TO LADISLAUS, KING OF POLAND

(June 10, 1412<sup>1</sup>)

May the grace of Jesus Christ be granted to you for the ruling of your people and the attaining of the life of glory!

Most serene prince, it hath brought me great joy and comfort to hear that your Majesty in the providence of Almighty God hath come to an agreement with the most illustrious King Sigismund.<sup>2</sup> The people and myself are united in the prayer that God may direct<sup>3</sup> the lives of both of you in the way of righteousness, and your subjects as well. To this end, most illustrious prince, it appears to be a prior condition alike for your Majesty, for his excellence King Sigismund, and for the other princes, that the heresy of simony should be removed from your dominions. But is it possible to expect its banishment when it hath spread its poison so widely that

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in MS.

<sup>2</sup> On this peace of Sigismund, the Poles, and the Teutonic Knights, see Aschbach, *Kaiser Sigmund* (Hamburg, 1845), i. c. 16, and the letter of Sigismund (March 28, 1412) in *ib.* i. 437.

<sup>3</sup> P.; *vita . . . dirigatur*; H.: *vitam . . . dirigat*,



scarcely anywhere can clergy or people be found that have not been laid low by this heresy of simony? Who is honest enough to present to a see for the honour of God, for the salvation of the people, and for one's own salvation? Who is so disinterested as to accept a see, a parish living, or any other benefice under the constraint of these three motives? I would that there were many to refuse them as a form of bondage and human bribery! But are not the words of Jeremiah fulfilled: *From the least of them even to the greatest all follow hard after covetousness, and from the prophet even to the priest all make a lie?*<sup>1</sup> Is the disciple of Christ wide of the mark when he says: *All seek the things that that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's?*<sup>2</sup> It is the voice of the Church weeping, because *the gold is become dim and the finest colour is changed.*<sup>3</sup> Once the priesthood was like gold aflame with love and burnished with virtues; but now it hath become earthy and blackened, as Bernard saith.<sup>4</sup> The words of our Saviour are fulfilled: *Iniquity shall abound*—that is, among the clergy—*and charity shall grow cold*<sup>5</sup> among the people. Woe, therefore, to him that weeps not for such a time! Most illustrious prince, it is because they hear a message like this that a simoniac, pomp-loving, luxurious, and unrestrained clergy charge me with defamation of their order and heresy-mongering. But shall I keep silence? God forbid! Woe is me

<sup>1</sup> Jer. vi. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Lam. iv. 1.

<sup>4</sup> P.: *ut ait Bernardus*; H.: *ut ait Bene impletur*—i.e., *ut ait Jeremias*. I cannot put my finger on this passage. But similar statements in St. Bernard abound.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiv. 12.



if I keep silence! It is better for me to die than not to resist the wickedness which would make me a partner in their crimes and in their hell. May it please the King of glory to preserve your Majesty from these things for the holy government of your people!

MASTER JOHN HUS,  
an unprofitable priest of Christ.

The opposition of Hus to the indulgences separated the Reformer for ever from his former friends Stanislaus and Palecz. The first cause of their 'backsliding like a crab,' as Hus termed it, is somewhat obscure. In the autumn of 1408, in furtherance of Wenzel's policy, an embassy was despatched to the Pisan cardinals. It consisted of John Cardinalis of Reinstein, the usual envoy of Wenzel, Mařik Rwačka, Stanislaus of Znaim, and Stephen Palecz. The two last, for some reason or other—perhaps because of their well-known sympathy with the Wyclifists—incurd the suspicion of Cossa. They were arrested at Bologna, 'deprived of their goods, and imprisoned.' Hus, Jesenicz, and Christian Prachaticz at once laboured for their release. At length, after petitions from the University (December 8, 1408) and from the Pisan cardinals themselves (February 12, 1409), this was procured, though not before Palecz was robbed of '207 gold knights.' They returned to Prague to find the University wrecked by the disruption. Whether this last event, or some subtle influences brought to bear upon them in their imprisonment, or the greater conservatism of maturer years, led to a change of view, we know not. Certain it is that they slowly drifted from alliance with Hus into the bitterest opposition. They first became what Hus called 'Terminists'—*i.e.*, Nominalists—then by a natural sequence the persecutors of their old associates. But we must beware of doing them the injustice of supposing that the drift was on their side only. Nor must we forget that by Hus's expulsion of the Germans from the University the triumphant Czechs, no longer united by a common hatred, had now opportunity to discover unsuspected lines of cleavage among themselves.

On the outbreak of the dispute over the indulgences, Palecz, for the moment, had wavered. A meeting on the matter was held

at the rectory of Christian Prachaticz. 'If Palecz is willing to confess the truth,' said Hus, 'he will remember that he was the first to give me with his own hand the articles of indulgence, with the remark in writing (*manu*) that they contained palpable errors. I keep the copy to this day as a witness. But after he had consulted with another colleague he went over to the other camp. The last word I said to him—for I have not spoken to him since—was this: "Palecz is my friend, Truth is my friend; of the two it were only right to honour Truth most."'

The theologians, in fact, were unanimous that it was not their business to inquire into the value of the apostolic letters, but 'as obedient sons to obey, and fight those who opposed.'

Palecz and Stanislaus were not the only foes whom Hus at this time was driven to encounter. In Letter XIV. we are introduced to his most unsparing literary opponent, Stephen, the prior of the Carthusian monastery of Dolein, near Olmütz, in Moravia. According to Stephen's own statement, Hus and he at one time had been 'men of one mind who had taken sweet meat together'; but they had long since drifted apart. As early as 1408 we find Stephen refuting Wyclif's *Triologus* in his *In Medullam Tritici* ("The Marrow of Wheat"), dedicated to Kbel, whom we have already met (*supra*, p. 12). In this work the references to Hus are few and slight, but his condemnation of Wyclif, whom Stephen recognises as the master, is unsparing.

The following letter of Hus was written in the summer of 1412. 'To which writing,' Stephen tells us, 'when the purport had been told me, and I had seen and ascertained it for myself, I composed the following brief answer'—to wit, that he would reply at length when a suitable opportunity arose. A few months later (autumn 1412) Stephen fulfilled his promise by bringing out his *Antihussus*, dedicated to Stanislaus of Znaim, in the preface of which he incorporated this letter of Hus. The work ends with a prayer and a curse: 'Holy Mary and all saints pray for us that the truth may be confirmed. Thou muck-sack (*sacce*) Wyclif pray for thy own that falsehood be condemned. Amen.' In September 1414, to anticipate his further writings, Stephen brought out his *Dialogus Volatilis inter Aucam et Passerem, seu Mag. Hus et Stephanum*, dedicated to the Bishop of Leitomischl, while in 1417, after Hus's death, he wrote his long *Epistle to the Hussites*. (All the above works are in Pez. *Thesaurus*, iv. pt. ii.)

XIV. TO THE BRETHREN OF THE MONASTERY OF  
DOLEIN, IN MORAVIA

(Undated : summer 1412)

To the honourable and religious inmates (*dominis*) of the convent in Dolein, beloved brothers of Christ, Master John Hus, a worthless servant in Christ.

May the love of God and the peace of Christ abound in your hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto you!

Worshipful sirs, I have heard how fiercely Dom Stephen with much abuse is assailing not only myself, but those also who hear Christ's sermons from my lips. If with just cause, he will receive the reward of justice; but if without cause, the reward of injustice from the Lord, Who knows the hearts of men. Therefore to you who are brothers in Christ and bound to me by ties of love, though separated by distance and unknown to me by sight, I am sending this heartfelt entreaty for the sake of your salvation and not in self-excuse (for to me it is of the slightest moment that I be judged of men): believe nothing that is preached about my holding or desiring to hold any error that is contrary to Holy Scripture or to morality: I do not say, "though Wyclif," but "not even though an angel came down from heaven and taught otherwise than what the Scripture hath taught."<sup>1</sup> For my soul abhors the errors they ascribe to me. But in refusing to obey

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 8. Hus was very sensitive about his dependence on Wyclif. Cf. his answer in 1414 (*Doc.*, 184): 'Whatever truth Wycliff has taught I receive, not because it is the truth of Wyclif, but because it is the truth of Christ'; and cf. *Mon.* i. 264a. In the *Medulla* of Stephen the dependence of Hus on Wyclif is clearly recognised,



the ruling of superiors, while offering no resistance to the power which is of the Lord God, I had the teaching of Scripture on my side, and especially the word and deed of the apostles, who, against the will of the priests, preached Jesus Christ as Lord, saying : *We ought to obey God rather than men.*<sup>1</sup> As to my not appearing at the Curia when summoned, there are many reasons for this.<sup>2</sup> In the first instance, when summoned I desired to depart ; but my own proctors as well as those of the other side wrote to me, urging me not to appear and uselessly sacrifice my life. It would also mean that I should neglect my preaching of God's word among the people and risk my life to no purpose. For a man to be judged by one whose open sins he attacks is to hand himself over to death. Yet if I had any reasonable ground for supposing that by my appearance and by my death I could be of service to some for their salvation, I would willingly appear, Jesus Christ helping me.

But, alas ! who can be of any service in these days in the midst of a people given over to greed, pride, and hardness of heart, who have turned away their hearing from the truth and are turned unto fables ?<sup>3</sup> May it please God Almighty to preserve His holy Church and yourselves from the wiles of Antichrist, and to commend me to your kind regard as a help to my happiness ! Dom Stephen, lay aside the suspicions which I hear you bear against me, until you are fully enlightened by the facts. You have read Christ's words : *Judge not, that you may not be judged :*

<sup>1</sup> Acts v. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, pp. 39-40. Stephen Dolein dwells on this matter in his *Dialogus*, pp. 464-7, and claims that Hus had shown no just cause why he should not have gone to Rome.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 4.



*condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.*<sup>1</sup> And yet you judge me, and in your book you condemn the soul of Wyclif.<sup>2</sup> Where is revelation, or Scripture, or personal acquaintance, that you condemn a man who stands at the bar of God? Would it not suffice you to condemn the man's words, and to wait for his condemnation by God's word or Holy Scripture?

Though deserted by his former friends, Hus was not alone. 'Women without number and powerful nobles' rallied to his cause, while the people, under the lead of that stormy petrel of reform, Jerome of Prague, once more took matters into their own hands. As usual in such cases, liberty speedily degenerated into licence. On June 24, 1412, Woksa of Waldstein drove up with a cart in which sat two harlots, or two students dressed up as harlots, 'with the papal bulls tied round their breasts.' An armed mob conducted the procession through the streets and

<sup>1</sup> Luke vi. 37.

<sup>2</sup> In a sermon before the Synod and in the presence of Zbinek (probably in June 1408), Hus had stated: 'I could hope that my soul should be where rests the soul of Wyclif.' His enemies added that he had claimed that Wyclif was a 'Catholic doctor,' but Hus argued that 'Catholic' cannot be expressed in Czech, and therefore he could not have said it. This famous wish of Hus was never forgiven or forgotten. It forms part of the charge of the Englishman Stokes, to which Hus replied as follows: 'I will not grant that Wyclif is a heretic, I will not affirm a negative, but I hope that he is not, since in doubtful matters one ought to choose the better part. Wherefore, I hope that Wyclif is among the saved.' At Constance Hus had to deal with the matter again. The reason for the heat with which the question was debated lay in the fact that Wyclif had never been condemned or even excommunicated during his lifetime. Was it possible, then, to condemn him 'in anima'? We have a curious illustration of the importance of this question in the Lollard Purvey's *Remonstrance*, p. 133 (see my *Age of Wyclif*, i. 306), as also in the famous Oxford forgery of October 5, 1406 (*ib.* i. 241-2). Wyclif, we must remember, was not formally condemned until the Council of Constance (May 4, 1415), unless, indeed, we count the curious Lateran Council of February 2, 1413. The reference to Dolein's 'book' is a general reference to the *Medulla Tritici*, whose other and more significant title was *Antiwiklifus*.

burnt the bulls and pardons in the market-place of the New Town, 'about the hour of vespers.' In the following August the students seized two pardoners at their trade. 'Get out, you liars,' cried Jerome; 'the Pope your master is a lying heretic.' A Carmelite friar 'selling relics for the building of a church' was seized as he sat, 'kicked out' of the church, and his table overturned, 'relics and all,' 'You are palming off dead men's bones,' shouted the people, 'you are hoodwinking Christians.'

A more serious riot was the affair of the Three Martyrs. In spite of Wenzel's edict—perhaps before it was officially promulgated—on July 10 three artisans cried out in a church that the indulgences were lies: 'John Hus has taught us better than that.' They were condemned to death. Hus, attended by a vast throng, demanded a hearing from the magistrates, and declared: 'Their fault is mine; I will bear the consequences.' To still the tumult evasive answers were given; but later in the day the prisoners were hurriedly executed, according to Hus, without the King's orders. The excitement was intense. Women 'dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood' of the martyrs, whose bodies, shrouded in white linen, were borne in procession to the Bethlehem Chapel. There amid the chanting of the hymn, "Isti sunt sancti," and 'the mass of martyrs,' they were buried 'in the name of God.' To all this, though not present himself at the funeral, Hus was a consenting party. The civil authorities deemed it well to disclaim the riot, and issue an order that no one should preach against the indulgences. But no attempt was made to punish its leaders, or even deprive Woksa for his buffoonery of his place at Court.

'That Luther,' laughed Leo, when he heard of his outbreak against Tetzal, 'has a pretty wit.' In the case of Hus, however, John was of a different mind. The Pope scarcely needed the formal complaint of the clergy of Prague, stirred up by Michael the Pleader, against 'that son of Belial, the Wyclifist Hus, a despiser of the keys' (May 1412). So he committed the case to Cardinal Peter Stefaneschi of St. Angelo, with instructions to proceed without delay. Stefaneschi at once pronounced upon Hus the great curse (July 1412). Hus was declared cut off from 'food, drink, buying, selling, conversation, hospitality, the giving of fire and water, and all other acts of kindness.' If within twenty-three days he did not yield, he

was to be excommunicated 'in all churches, monasteries, and chapels,' with the usual custom of 'lighted candles, extinguished and thrown to the ground.' Places which gave him shelter were to be subject to interdict. 'Three stones were to be hurled against his house as a sign of perpetual curse.' In a second bull the Bethlehem Chapel was ordered to be razed to the ground, and the person of Hus to be delivered up and burned.

Hus replied by a dignified appeal, which he read in the Bethlehem, from the Pope to 'the supreme and just Judge who is neither influenced by gifts (*supra*, p. 60, *n.*) nor deceived by false witnesses.' He consoled himself with the memories of Chrysostom and Grosseteste. His hope lay in the meeting of a General Council. Meanwhile he exhorted the people to put their trust in neither Pope, Church, nor prelates, but in God alone. As for himself—a matter which told heavily against him at Constance—he showed how little he cared for the censures of Rome by continuing as before his public preaching, and his administration of the sacraments (see p. 166, *n.* 1).

The excommunication and attendant interdict soon produced its effect in Prague. 'The people,' complained Hus, 'did not show sufficient courage to bury their dead in unconsecrated ground, and baptise their children themselves.' Riots broke out on every hand. On September 30 Jerome and others 'ducked friar Nicholas' in the Moldau. On October 2 a counter-attack was made on the Bethlehem Chapel, chiefly, says Hus, by the Germans, at that moment the dominant party in the Town Council: 'What madness! . . . what German audacity! . . . they are not allowed to pull down a bakehouse. The temple of God where the bread of God's word is distributed they wish to destroy.' But the Czechs rallied to their national cause, and prevented the outrage, in spite of the archers. But elsewhere the opponents of Hus were victorious. In the University Stanislaus of Znaim and Stephen Palecz were inveighing against their former friend in the presence of Duke Ernest of Austria. (October 1412). Nor was Hus helped by the formal proof of his ally John of Jesenicz, doctor of canon law, that the excommunication was illegal (December 18, 1412).

But we are slightly anticipating. Hus, in fact, had already left Prague, on the advice, or rather orders, of Wenzel. This step, as the following letter shows, the Reformer was at first unwilling to take. But Wenzel, who was placed in an awkward



position and feared the calling in of the secular arm, was persistent. So Hus left Prague—his enemies claimed that he was expelled—‘that a Synod for settlement might be held with more chance of success.’

The date of Hus’s exile, and therefore of the following letter, is somewhat uncertain. He seems to have left Prague first in the August of 1412, but a few months later, on his own statement, returned and preached. He was certainly absent in the October, when the attack was made on the Bethlehem (see *infra*, p. 94). But his final departure must have taken place in December 1412, for on the 14th of that month the secular arm was called in by the papal authorities. From the other letters which follow, and which were evidently written in the autumn of 1412, we are inclined to date the following as written before the first departure. Nicholas Miliczin was the colleague of Hus at the Bethlehem. He had taken his bachelor’s degree in 1401, his master’s in 1406. He is probably the Nicholas to whom Hus refers on pp. 236 and 274. Of Master Martin nothing is known, unless indeed he be the Master Martin, ‘his disciple,’ of later letters (see *infra*, pp. 149, 235, 274).

#### XV. TO MASTERS MARTIN AND NICOLAS MILICZIN

(Undated: August (?) 1412)

Peace be unto you—that peace which he that seeks shall not have with the world, the flesh, and the devil. *In the world, saith the Saviour, you shall have distress;*<sup>1</sup> but if you are jealous for that which is good, who is there to hurt you? I have a jealousy for preaching the gospel, but I am careworn, because I know not what I am to do.

I have pondered over our Saviour’s words in the gospel of John, chapter x.: *The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and flieth:*

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 33.



*and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep.*<sup>1</sup> I have also pondered over another passage in Matt. x.: *When they shall persecute you in this city, flee unto another.*<sup>2</sup> This, then, is the precept or promise of Christ. I am in a strait betwixt two, and know not how I ought to act.

I have pondered over the epistle of the blessed Augustine to Bishop Honoratus,<sup>3</sup> who sought guidance in a similar case. Here is the reply and conclusion of Augustine: *Whosoever fleeth so that his flight doth not leave the Church without the necessary ministry, is acting according to the Lord's precept or promise. But he that fleeth so as to withdraw from Christ's flock the nourishment which supports its spiritual life, is an hireling, who seeth the wolf coming and flieth, because he cared not for the sheep. Seeing, beloved brother, that you have consulted me, this is my genuine opinion and the answer which true love<sup>4</sup> moves me to send: but I do not restrict you to this view, if you can find a better. Nevertheless, we cannot find out any better how to act in these difficulties than by praying to our Lord God to pity us: for we<sup>5</sup> have obtained the power both to will and to do this very thing, to wit, that all the wise and holy men of God should not forsake the churches: and in the teeth of opposition we have not fallen away from our own purpose. Thus Augustine.*

<sup>1</sup> John x. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Maur, *Ep.* 228 (vol. ii. p. 830-35). Written during the irruption of the Vandals in 428 or 429 A.D. The unusual accuracy of the quotations in this letter would lead me to the conjecture that the editors of the *Monumenta* (1558), where alone it is found, did a little "editing" of the MS. after their wont.

<sup>4</sup> Mon.: *recta caritate*. Ed. Maur: *et certa*.

<sup>5</sup> Mon.: *qui id ipsum ut scilicet ecclesias non desererent . . . meruerunt*. Ed. Maur: *quod ipsum, ut scilicet Dei ecclesias non deserent, Dei dono . . . meruerunt*.

Let me know, therefore, if you can rest satisfied with this advice of Augustine; for I am urged by my conscience not to be absent and thus prove a stumbling block, although the necessary food of God's word be not wanting to the flock. On the other hand, the fear confronts me that my presence, by the wicked device of an edict, may become a pretext for the withdrawal of that food—that is, the Holy Communion, and the other things pertaining to salvation.

Therefore, let us humbly pray that it may please Almighty God to instruct us how I, poor wretch! am to act in the present crisis, so as not to stray from the paths of righteousness. It is beautiful advice that the blessed Augustine gives in that letter. For there he clearly lays down in the special case brought to his notice that it is possible to flee lawfully. He mentions St. Athanasius<sup>1</sup> as an example. Supposing the lives of all were in peril, then perhaps it would be their duty to arrange for some one to take to flight who<sup>2</sup> would be most useful for the welfare of the Church in the days to come, and thus perhaps carry out, etc.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Infra* in same letter: 'the holy Athanasius who was specially sought after by the Emperor Constantius, while the Catholic people who remained in Alexandria were in no wise deserted by the other ministers.'

<sup>2</sup> *quis*. Either read *qui*, or *quis* is used elliptically for *aliquem qui*.

<sup>3</sup> *facta forte*, etc. There is no MS., only the ed. 1558 (*Monumenta*). Perhaps we should read *facta sorte*, 'arrange by casting lots,' etc., for Augustine goes on to say that 'in such a difficulty the lot seems the fairest decision, in default of others.'

## Part III.—Letters Written during the Exile of Hus

(September 1412—August 1414)

Hus, as we have seen, had left Prague in the early autumn of 1412, but soon returned. On his final retirement in the December, Wenzel, who had insisted on the step, fulfilled his part of the unwritten compact by giving orders for a Synod to meet on February 2 at Böhmish Brod, a small town belonging to the Archbishop. In reality the Synod assembled at Prague on February 6, at the very time at which in Rome the works of Wyclif were being publicly burnt in the great square of St. Peter's, on the orders of John's Lateran Council (February 10, 1413). Before this Synod all parties laid their memorials—the theological faculty, the artists, and the Reformers. The opponents of Hus, chief among whom was "the Iron Bishop," John Bucka of Leitomischl, insisted that the papal decisions and the excommunication of Hus must be upheld, 'that a vice-chancellor be appointed to search out and punish the errors of masters and scholars,' and that 'the Czech writings of Hus—the stalks of these accursed tares and schism—be placed under an anathema.' Obedience, they claimed, was the first duty of all, nor was it their business to consider whether the excommunication of Hus was just or unjust. Hus on his part—he was not there in person—both in his appeal to the Synod (*infra*, p. 115) as well as in his 'conditions of peace,' demanded the upholding of the decision of Zbinek of July 6, 1411. He harped much on the injury done to the realm by the accusations of heresy. Let the heretic be named, if known. On the personal charge he was prepared to defend himself under penalties against all opponents, but demanded in return that his calumniators, if they failed to substantiate their charges, should not escape scot free. Hus's most important condition, one that shows also the influence of Wyclif, is his claim that the Civil Courts must be supreme 'in all approbations, condemnations, and other acts concerning Mother



Church.' Hus was followed by Jakoubek, who put in a plea that peace without a real reform would be valueless. Finally, the masters of Prague, the artists, wrote an elaborate reply, in which we may detect the inspiration of Jesenicz, to the claims and arguments of the theologians. The Synod was dissolved without result, and Hus retired once more to his asylum at the castle of Kozi hradek, near Austi.

Meanwhile Wenzel made one more attempt at compromise. A Commission of four was appointed, with the ex-Archbishop Albik at the head. Both parties bound themselves 'under a penalty of a thousand guineas and exile from the realm' to accept its verdict. Hus himself again was absent. He was represented by 'his proctor, John of Jesenicz, with him Jakoubek of Mies and Simon of Tissnow,' while on the Commission was his friend, Christian Prachaticz, rector of St. Michael's, Prague, who in the October of 1412 had been chosen, after a somewhat disputed election, the rector of the University. We have accounts of this Commission written by both parties; by Hus in a letter to Christian Prachaticz (see *infra*, No. XXVII.), and by Palecz to his colleagues in the theological faculty. At the first meeting, in April, in the usual resort of the advanced party, the parsonage of Christian Prachaticz, it was evident that neither side would accept anything less than a verdict in their favour. Stanislaus said that he was wishful for peace, but the others must agree to the declaration of faith put forth by the theological faculty, 'that the Pope is the head of the Roman Church, the cardinals the body, that all its decisions in matters of faith are true, that the contrary opinions of the Wyclifists are false and erroneous.' The other side thereupon, adds Palecz, 'horribly yelled against us for two days.' The 'horrible yelling' was really an effort to accomplish the impossible, to mix oil and water, the principles of Rome and the Reformation. Jesenicz was willing to yield to Stanislaus's definition of the Church, provided he were allowed to add to the statement of the faith and obedience due a saving clause, 'such as every good and faithful Christian ought, or is bound to give.' This loophole for private judgment was of course impossible. Even this concession, on reflection, seemed to Hus to be granting too much. In his letters to Christian he points out the difficulties of such a view of the Church. These difficulties, chiefly copied from Wyclif, he afterwards expanded into his *De Ecclesia*. We see, in



fact, in these letters to Christian, especially Nos. XXVIII. and XXIX., the larger treatise in process of becoming. But we are anticipating. The immediate result of the gathering was the formal decision by its president that the two parties were really at one. 'Be it then announced in the name of all that neither party is permitted in future to wrong the other in word or writing.'

Such official declarations of peace where there was no peace were of course valueless. The meeting was a failure, but the Wyclifists retained the ear of the King. Wenzel relieved his disappointment by at once banishing Stanislaus of Znaim, Stephen Palecz, and two other opponents of Hus as the 'authors of dissension.' Stanislaus—'out of whose head,' says Hus, 'the greater part of this nonsense had come'—retired into Moravia as the chaplain to a widow lady. He spent the rest of his days in writing numerous bitter tractates against Wyclif and Hus. He died at Neuhaus, in Moravia, from abscesses, when on the point of setting out for his revenge at Constance. Hus and Palecz were destined to meet again.

This victory for Hus was followed by a political success. Hitherto in the Old Town of Prague the council consisted of sixteen Germans and two Czechs. The Germans were on the side of the papal party, and had attempted, as we have seen, the destruction of the Bethlehem. On October 21, Wenzel issued an order transferring to the Crown the "pricking" of the eighteen councillors, nine from each nation. In the New Town the Czechs had long possessed the control. The whole of Prague was now committed to Hus's side. The Church authorities were powerless. Albik had resigned (February 10, 1413), or rather exchanged his archbishopric with Conrad of Vechta, Bishop of Olmütz, who in later years became a Hussite. His creed at this time was probably opportunism; at any rate he had but recently been inducted (July 17, 1413). Nevertheless, Hus deemed it well to stay in the country, first at Kozi hradek—not far from the later well-known Tabor—then, that he might be nearer the capital, at the castle of Krakowec, which belonged to his friend Henry Lefl of Lazan. 'Here he remained,' says the chronicler, 'until such time as he went to Constance.' This statement must not be pressed. In the early months of 1414 Hus tells us that he visited Prague repeatedly. One of his visits was on the Feast of Relics (April 20), an incident that sheds light

on certain features of his character and letters (*infra*, p. 249, *n*). On another occasion he even preached in the Bethlehem, whereupon the clergy at once renewed the interdict. Apart from these visits and his preaching tours, Hus spent his time in a lively correspondence with his friends, especially Christian Prachaticz, and in composing, as his answer to recent charges, his great work *On the Church*. Of this famous treatise, Dietrich Niem, the historian of the Schism, remarked at Constance that it 'attacks the papal power and the plenitude of its authority as much as the Alcoran the Catholic faith'—a statement usually attributed, but wrongly, to Cardinal D'Ailli. But the *De Ecclesia* of Hus, as Loserth has shown, contains hardly a line, local colouring and polemics apart, which does not proceed from Wyclif. On its completion the volume was sent to Prague and publicly read (July 8, 1413) in the Bethlehem Chapel, on the walls of which the main positions of Hus's pamphlet, *De Sex Erroribus*, had already been set up in large text. With the publication of this treatise there is for a while a gap in the letters of Hus. But one letter, in fact, has been preserved for us (No. XXXII.) between this event and the preparations of Hus, in the August of 1414, for his journey to Constance.

The literary labours of Hus, among which must be reckoned many treatises in Czech, whose alphabet he reformed by his invention of diacritical signs, did not interfere with his toils in the gospel, for on leaving Prague he had felt driven by his conscience to resume his sermons (*infra*, p. 97). 'Hitherto,' he writes, 'I have preached in towns and market-places; now I preach behind hedges, in villages, castles, fields, woods. If it were possible, I would preach on the seashore, or from a ship, as my Saviour did'—an interesting passage with which we may compare a statement in his *Letters* (*infra*, p. 101). He specially mentions as a favourite pulpit 'a lime-tree near Kozi.' One thing gravely distressed him. 'Jesus went to preach on foot, not like our modern preachers, proudly carried in a carriage. I, alas! drive.' His excuse is necessity. 'I could not otherwise possibly get in time to places so far distant.' In the stress which he laid upon preaching, both in his *Letters* and in his other writings, Hus again followed Wyclif. 'Preachers,' he said, in words which are an echo from England, 'in my judgment count in the Church for more than prelates.' But his power in the pulpit itself Hus owed to no man, and his love of preaching

was the gift of God. 'By the help of God,' he said, 'I have preached, still am preaching, and if His grace will allow, shall continue to preach; if perchance I may be able to lead some poor tired, blind, or halting soul into the house of Christ to the King's supper.'

As the result of these labours, the doctrines of Hus spread on every hand, both in cottage and castle, in Prague and in the country. We see this consciousness of success in the proud answer the Reformer made at Constance to the questions of D'Ailli: 'Yes, I have said that I came here of my own free will. If I had been unwilling to come here, neither that King (Wenzel) nor this (Sigismund) would have been able to force me to come, so numerous and so powerful are the Bohemian nobles who love me, and within whose castles I should have been able to lie concealed.' At this the bystanders began to grumble. D'Ailli, with a shake of his head, cried out, 'What effrontery!' 'He speaks truth,' said John of Chlum. 'I am a poor knight in our realm, but I should have been glad to have kept him for a year, whoever liked it or disliked it, so that no one would have been able to get him. There are numbers of great nobles who love him, who have strong castles. They could keep him as long as they wished even against both those kings.' This consciousness of a national party at his back explains the readiness with which Hus went to Constance, and his strange optimism as to the result.

The letters of Hus written during his exile, when read in the light of this introduction, will explain themselves. They are of very diverse interest and value, some chiefly polemical, others exhibiting the tenderest side of a pastor's care for his flock. The exact order of the letters is largely conjectural, the following letter, for instance, presumably being written on receiving the news of the attempted destruction of the Bethlehem. Though this letter is written in Czech, Hus seems to have had no rule on the matter, the letters that follow, though addressed to the same people, being in Latin. Letter XVII. is a remarkably dignified and interesting pastoral, probably intended to be read from the pulpit of the Bethlehem, as we know from other sources was the custom (*infra*, p. 172). So too in the case of others of this series. Letters XX. and XXII. are beautiful Christmas addresses, which even in a translation will give some idea of Hus's powers as a preacher. In Letter XXVI. we have a wistful, tender strain in



the first part of the letter, passing into a fighting spirit towards the close. As a revelation of the man this letter (XXVI.) is invaluable. We may add that the letters written during the exile are not easy to translate, while the references they contain to current polemics do not always add interest for a later generation.

## XVI. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE.

(*Without date : early in October 1412.*)

May God be with you, beloved lords and masters ! I beg you in the first place to consider God's cause, to which great injury is being done ; for certain persons desire to suppress His holy word, to destroy a chapel<sup>1</sup> that is useful for the preaching of His word, and thus to hinder men from salvation. Secondly, consider the disgrace brought upon your country and nation and race. Thirdly, consider the shame and wrong that are being unjustly done to yourselves. Fourthly, consider and endure it patiently, that the devil is raging against you, and Antichrist is showing his teeth ; and yet like a dog chained up he will do you no hurt if you be lovers of God's truth. Look ! he hath been raging against me for a number of years, and hath not yet hurt a hair of my head, but is ever adding to my joy and gladness.

Moreover, you ought to know that to abjure is to be guilty of renouncing what you believe in. Thus, one who abjures either renounces the true faith which he held, or a heresy and an error. It is as if one were a Christian, and through fear or the devil's enticement were to mix himself up with Jews or pagans and swear that he wished no

<sup>1</sup> The Bethlehem : *supra*, p. 87.



longer to hold Christianity. *Vice versâ*, if a man holds a heresy—*e.g.*, suppose he believes that the Lord Christ is not very God, as Jews and pagans believe—and then renounces this error, he is said to have abjured. Accordingly, be assured that if any of you abjure, as they suggest in their letters, he will abjure either the true faith and the truth, or—heresy and error. Accordingly, either after abjuring he will hold heresy or error—or before doing so, he will be proved to have held what he abjures. Therefore, understand that in their letters they judge you to be heretics and demand that you abjure the heresy which they suppose you to hold. From this it is evident that a son or friend of yours, if he abjure, can be disgraced for having consorted with a heretical father or friend. Further, it is evident that any other person can rightly say to any one who abjures, “You abjured the heresy which you held and you are not worthy of me.” In the third place, understand that if any one abjures and retains in his mind the truth he abjures, as they bid you do, he will be a perjurer. Let us then consider these matters and give the preference to the truth and to the promise of God. Let us live nobly in love and resist the lie of Antichrist to the end. Let us make the Saviour Almighty our Helper, Whom no man can overcome, and Who will never forsake us so long as we ourselves do not forsake Him. He will give us an eternal reward—to wit, the satisfaction of will, reason, memory, and all the senses of the body without stint. I write this to you (for I cannot conveniently come to you) that the priests may not thwart you in your religious duties and interfere with your good pleasure. Amen.

## XVII. TO THE SAME.

(Without date : early in October 1412)

Master John Hus, a servant of Jesus Christ in hope, to all that love God and confess His law, looking for the appearing of the Saviour, with whom they yearn to live for ever : grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself up as a sacrifice for our sins, to deliver us from this troublesome world and from eternal damnation according to the will of God the Father, to Whom be glory for ever.<sup>1</sup> Amen.

Beloved, I thank God on hearing of your desire for God's word and your faithful progress therein ; and I pray that it may please Him to give you a perfect understanding that you may recognise the wiles and deceits of Antichrist and his ministers and not suffer yourselves to be drawn away from God's truth.

I trust that in His mercy He will fulfil the good work that has been begun in you and will not allow you to stray from His truth. Many have forsaken it in fear of danger, being in terror of miserable man rather than of Almighty God, Who hath the power to kill and make alive, to destroy and to save, and to preserve His faithful ones in divers sore perils, and to grant unto them the eternal life with joy unspeakable in return for a little momentary suffering.

Therefore, dear friends, be not afraid or disturbed with terror because the Lord tries some of you by suffering the ministers of Antichrist to frighten you with their tyranny. For God Himself, in Proverbs, third chapter, saith to one of His servants : *Be not*

<sup>1</sup> A paraphrase of Gal. i. 4-5.

*afraid of sudden fear, nor of the power of the wicked falling upon thee. For the Lord will be at thy side, etc.*<sup>1</sup> And by His prophet David He saith:<sup>2</sup> *I am with him in tribulation: I will deliver him and glorify him, etc.*

Knowing this, dear friends, *count it all joy*—as St. James saith—*when you shall fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience, and patience hath a perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, failing in nothing.* And afterward he saith: *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation. For when he hath been proved he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him.*<sup>3</sup> Stand, therefore, firmly in the truth which you know; do all things, whatsoever you do, as sons of God. Have confidence, because Christ hath conquered and you too will conquer. Remember Him Who endured many persecutions at the hands of sinners that you fail not in your good desires; and, at the same time, *laying aside every weight* of sin, *let us run* to constant battle, considering Jesus, the *author and finisher of our faith, who having joy set before him endured the shame of the cross, despising confusion and sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God.*<sup>4</sup>

Seeing that the Creator, the King and Lord of all the world, not being constrained by the necessity of His divinity, did humble Himself by His humanity, He, albeit without sin, faithfully ministered to us sinners, bearing hunger, thirst, cold, heat, watchings, weakness, toils in teaching, and suffered dreadful insults at the hands of the bishops,<sup>5</sup> priests, and scribes,

<sup>1</sup> Prov. iii. 25-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xc. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Jas. i. 2-4, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. xii. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Episcopis*; the reader will note this.



so that they called Him gluttonous, winebibber, possessed of a devil,<sup>1</sup> and a blasphemer, saying: *This man is not of God.*<sup>2</sup> Branding Him with heresy, they excommunicated Him, and leading Him outside the city, they crucified Him as a malefactor.

If, therefore, Christ suffered such things at the hands of the priests, He that healed all sicknesses by His word, and Who without money and without price,<sup>3</sup> cast out devils, raised the dead, taught them the law of God, hurt no man in anything, and did no sin, except only that He exposed their wickedness, why do we wonder if to-day the ministers of Antichrist, who are more greedy, luxurious, cruel and crafty than the Pharisees, persecute God's servants, insult, curse, excommunicate, imprison, and kill them?<sup>4</sup>

You will remember that our King and Lord said: *If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*<sup>5</sup>

Mark! You have the prophecy of our Saviour, that His elect will suffer persecution of the world—that is, of wicked men who know not God the Father and the Lord Jesus in truth. For though with their mouth *they profess that they know God*, yet by their evil works they *deny him*, as St. Paul

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 19, 18.    <sup>2</sup> John ix. 16.    <sup>3</sup> A paraphrase of Isa. lv. 1.

<sup>4</sup> A reference to the Three Martyrs, *supra*, p. 78.    <sup>5</sup> John xv. 18-21.



saith to Titus:<sup>1</sup> *Whose works are manifest,*<sup>2</sup> greed, simony, pride, luxury, the forsaking and despising of God's word; who set also the traditions of men above every word of God, caring naught for humility, poverty, temperance, and the love of Christ.

Therefore the evil shall not cease to persecute the good so long as the war of Christ and Antichrist shall last in this world. For St. Paul saith: *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, erring and driving into error.*<sup>3</sup>

St. Paul means by these words that all the godly shall suffer persecution for Christ's sake. But evil men shall err and seduce others, and so shall fulfil their desires in evil-doing to their own destruction. Therefore, the Saviour prophesied of these in the words: *Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves. But beware of men. For they will deliver you up in councils and they will scourge you in their synagogues. . . . The brother also shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son, and the children shall rise up against father and mother and shall put them to death. And they shall be hated by all men for my name's sake; but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved. And when they shall persecute you in this city, flee into another.*<sup>4</sup> But this persecution shall last till the day of judgment.

Therefore He saith further: *Amen, I say to you, you shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the son of man come. The disciple is not above the master, nor the*

<sup>1</sup> Tit. i. 16. P. following *Mon.* reads: *cum negant. Ut sanctus Paulus* etc. This punctuation is manifestly wrong.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 12-13.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 16-17, 21-3.

*servant above his lord. If they have called the goodman of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household? Therefore fear them not.*<sup>1</sup>

These words the Lord spake to His disciples that they might be able to escape such snares, cheering their minds that they might be wise and recognise by their works the ravening wolves that would swallow up the whole world in their greed.

Besides, He taught them how false prophets are recognised—namely, by the fact that they do not agree with the true prophets either in their writings<sup>2</sup> or in their works. Thus, there are false Christs who assert that they are Christ's chief disciples, while in their works they are His chief foes and adversaries. Therefore in all possible ways they attempt to crush God's word, because it reproves their contumacy, pride, greed, luxury, simony, and other evil works.

They have accordingly attacked certain places of worship and chapels<sup>3</sup> to prevent the word of God being preached in them; but Christ hath not suffered them to commit such a crime. I hear that they are now devising the destruction of the Bethlehem Chapel and are preventing preaching in other places of worship, where God's word is wont to be taught; but I trust God that they will accomplish nothing. At first they laid their gins, their citations, and anathemas for the Goose, and now they are lying in wait for some of you; but since the Goose, a tame creature and a domestic fowl with no power

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 23-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Scripturis*. Either a loose use or false reading for *scriptis*, or else attracted, so to speak, by the preceding *prophetis*.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 79. From the next paragraph we infer the date.

to reach great heights in his flight, hath yet broken through their nets, we may the more confidently expect that other birds, which by God's word and by their lives soar to high places, will break their traps in pieces. They spread out their nets and struck terror with their anathema as with a wooden toy-hawk and they shot their fiery bolt from Antichrist's quiver, provided only they might hinder God's word and worship. But the more they seek to conceal their true nature the oftener it betrays itself, and the more they strive to lay out their traditions like a net, the more they are broken through. In seeking to have the peace of the world, they lose both that and spiritual peace; in seeking to hurt others, they chiefly thwart themselves.

They suffer, therefore, the fate of the priests and high priests of the Jews, in that they lost what they tried to keep and fell into the pit they wished to escape in supposing that they could overcome and crush the truth, which always conquers. For its very property and nature is such that the more it is obscured, the more it shines forth, and the more it is laid low, the more it is raised up.

The high priests, priests, scribes, and Pharisees, the Herods, Pilate, and the people of Jerusalem condemned the Truth and gave Him to death and laid Him in the tomb; but He rose again, overcame them all, and gave in His own stead twelve other preachers.

And it is this same Truth Who hath sent to Prague, in the place of one feeble, weakly Goose, falcons and eagles, which surpass all other birds in the keenness of their sight. These, by God's grace, soar high and seize other birds for Christ Jesus, Who will strengthen these His servants and confirm all His faithful ones.



For He saith: *I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*<sup>1</sup> If then He, the true God, is with us, our mighty and righteous Defender, who in his malice<sup>2</sup> would be able to withstand us? What fear shall part us from Him? or what death? What shall we lose, if for His sake we lose wealth, friends, the world's honours, and our poor life? Surely at last we shall be delivered from this misery to receive wealth a hundred-fold more splendid, friends far dearer, and a joy more perfect. Death will not rob us of these things. For whoso dies for Christ, he is conqueror, and is delivered from all misery, and attains the eternal joy to which may it please our Saviour to bring us all.

This letter, dear brothers and sisters beloved, I write that you may be steadfast in the truth you have learnt and may have no fear of citations, and pay no less heed than before to the hearing of God's word by reason of the cruel threats they utter. For God is faithful,<sup>3</sup> Who will confirm and guard you from evil.

Finally, beloved, I beseech you to pray for them who proclaim God's truth with grace. Pray for me also that I too may write and preach in fuller measure against the malice of Antichrist, and that God may put me in the forefront of the battle, if needs be, to defend His truth.

For be assured I shrink not from yielding up this poor body to peril or death for the sake of God's truth, though I know that God's word hath no need

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> P. : *militia sua*. Read with Mon., *malitia sua*, because of the *sua*. Otherwise 'in this warfare' would make a better reading.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. x. 23.



of us, nay, rather the truth of the gospel is spreading from day to day.

But I desire to live for the sake of those who suffer violence and need the preaching of God's word, that the malice of Antichrist may be exposed in such wise that the godly can escape it. That is why I am preaching elsewhere and ministering to all such, knowing that the will of God is fulfilled in me, whether I die at the hands of Antichrist or on the bed of sickness. If I come to Prague, I am sure that my foes will be in wait for me and persecute you. For they do not serve God themselves, and they prevent others from serving Him. But let us pray God for them, that if there be any of the elect among them, they may be turned to the knowledge of the truth.

May God grant to you understanding in the things I write, and perseverance withal! May it please Him to fulfil your desires with every blessing by the merits of Jesus Christ, *who suffered for us* a most shameful and cruel death, *leaving us an example*<sup>1</sup> that we should suffer in like manner according to His will. Amen.

### XVIII. TO THE SAME

(*Without date : October (?) 1412*)

Master John Hus, a servant of Jesus Christ, to all who are at Prague, grace and peace from Jesus Christ! With my whole heart I earnestly desire that you may be free from all sin through Jesus Christ, and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, setting at naught the vanities of this world. May

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 21.

you, through the grace of Jesus Christ, in a spirit of goodwill suffer all things for salvation's sake, and so be able to persevere in your afflictions, even to the end. This is the burden of my entreaty on your behalf, for I always make mention of you in my prayers. It was for this that I laboured among you in the word of God for more than twelve years,<sup>1</sup> as God is my witness; and it was the best comfort I could have, when I learnt of your diligence in hearing God's word and marked the real and sincere penitence of many among you.

Therefore, dear friends, I beseech you, by the passion of Christ, to keep His gospel and hold it fast, and to bring forth fruit as you advance in all the things which in those days I rehearsed to you. Do not vacillate and waver in your minds. Moreover, give no heed to those who have entered upon an uncertain path and have taken a different turning, and who are now the keenest opponents of God and of my actions.

But you know, dear friends, that Christ's disciples, who dwelt in His company, turned aside and walked no more with Him.<sup>2</sup> Christ, indeed, came to separate men from another. As He Himself saith: *I came to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother.*<sup>3</sup> And again: *You shall be betrayed for My name's sake by all men.*<sup>4</sup> And that we may not be moved by their rejection and terrified by persecution or death, the Saviour presently adds:

<sup>1</sup> According to Hus's own statement, the first year of his preaching was 1401 (*Mon.* i. 39*b*). He was elected to the Bethlehem March 14, 1402. Hus is here reckoning, therefore, from his appointment to priest's orders in 1400.

<sup>2</sup> John vi. 67 (A.V. vi. 66).

<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxi. 17.

*But a hair of your head shall not perish: in your patience you shall possess your souls.*<sup>1</sup> If then a single hair shall not perish, how then can the faithful perish? Therefore, dear friends, study to keep the true faith and the sure hope. Stand firmly in the love of God's word and cleave to it with earnest desire, listening to those whom the Saviour hath sent, that they may preach His gospel to you with fearless constancy, and withstand ravening wolves and false prophets. It is concerning these that Christ speaks to the faithful ones in the words: *Many false prophets shall arise and shall seduce many.*<sup>2</sup> Christ bids the faithful beware of them, and teaches how they can be recognised—to wit, by their fruits, which are pride, fornication, greed, simony, contempt of God's word and persecution of the faithful, backbiting, sycophancy, zeal for the traditions of men, etc.

Now, such wear *sheep's clothing*; <sup>3</sup> they put on the name and office of the Christian; and being within *ravening wolves*,<sup>4</sup> they mangle and tear the flock of Christ. It was of these wolves that Christ spake to His disciples: *Behold (saith He), I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves.*<sup>5</sup> They had to be *wise as serpents*, He said, so as not to suffer themselves to be deceived and to slay within them Christ their Head; and *simple as doves*, so as to endure with patience the cruelty of wolves. Mark, dear friends, what a clear exposure of the wolves we have here, ay, and of their doctrine, so that we may not suffer ourselves to be enticed by them from the way of Christ, whereby we hasten to attain the joys of heaven. Preserve and

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxi. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. vii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>5</sup> Matt. x. 16.



guard *faith*, hope, *charity*, humility, *gentleness*, justice, *modesty*, temperance, sobriety, *patience*,<sup>1</sup> and the other virtues which adorn our lives with noble conduct and works. Rejoice in that you suffer persecution.<sup>2</sup> For Christ saith: *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*<sup>3</sup> *Blessed are ye when men hate you,*<sup>4</sup> excommunicate and cast you out with anathemas for the sake of God's word. *Rejoice in that day: for great is your reward in heaven.*<sup>5</sup> Who, then, having faith, hope, and charity, would not for the Saviour's sake undergo all such insults and shame, when he is sure of receiving a hundredfold in life eternal?

Looking, therefore, as you do for these things, you will remember what Christ said: *There shall be tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be.*<sup>6</sup> How so? The apostle himself gives us the reason: *For (saith he) there shall be a time when they will not endure<sup>7</sup> sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will join themselves<sup>8</sup> unto fables.*<sup>9</sup>

This prophecy of St. Paul you now see with your own eyes already fulfilled. For elsewhere He saith: *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But impious men and seducers will grow worse and worse.*<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, dear friends, as St. Peter exhorteth: *Take heed lest, being led aside by the error of the unwise, you fall from your own steadfastness; but grow in the*

<sup>1</sup> Gal. vi. 22-3.<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 10<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 5.<sup>4</sup> Luke vi. 22.<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxiv. 21.<sup>7</sup> Mon. P.: *m non recipient*; read with Vulgate: *cum*.<sup>8</sup> *Connectent.*<sup>9</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 3-4.<sup>10</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 12-13.



*grace of God and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*<sup>1</sup> Pray God for me that it may please Him to grant me prosperity and success in preaching His word in all places where necessity shall demand—in cities, towns, villages, castles, fields, forests—wherever I can be of help, that the word of God may not be put to silence within me.<sup>2</sup>

Salute<sup>3</sup> one another and comfort one another in the grace of God the Father and of His dearly beloved Son and of His Holy Spirit. He can guard you from sin and settle you in eternal joy: to whom be praise and glory for ever. Amen.

### XIX. TO THE SAME

(Without date: October 1412)

To the faithful who are zealous for the Lord Jesus Christ and His word, dwelling in the city of Prague: Master John Hus, a priest unprofitable, yet having a desire for their perseverance in the love of God.

Dear friends, it is because of my strong desire that I beseech you not to draw back from the truth, the knowledge of which the Saviour in His mercy hath generously bestowed upon you. I trust indeed that the Lord will perfect what He hath begun in you the elect, and will grant unto you perseverance when you are tempted. For myself, likewise, I trust in the kindly goodness of our Saviour, although now I can say with the apostle, that *to me to live is Christ and to die gain: and if to live in the flesh, this is to me the fruit of labour: and what I shall choose, I know not. But I am straitened between two, having a desire to be dissolved*

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 17-18; very inexact.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> P. : *Salvate*; read with Mon. : *Salutate*.

and to be with Christ, a thing by far the better. But to abide still in the flesh is needful for you.<sup>1</sup> So wrote the apostle to the Philippians, when confined in a Roman prison. In like manner, dearly beloved, I say to you, though not yet shut up in prison, that I would gladly die for Christ and be with Him; and yet I desire to labour for your salvation and *what I shall choose, I know not,*<sup>2</sup> awaiting the mercy of God. I fear, however, that much ill may be wrought among you and that the faithful may suffer, while the wicked may lose their souls. The latter are now rejoicing and demanding that not only should the word of God be silenced within me, but also that the place of God's word—the Bethlehem—should be closed by force.<sup>3</sup> But is it possible that the Lord Almighty will grant them what they are asking for? Even though He suffer them by reason of the crimes of wicked men, as He did in Bethlehem, where He was born, and in Jerusalem, where He redeemed us, let us still sound abroad the praise of His glory, humbling ourselves under His power; He is with those who love Him, and delivers them that suffer in His behalf and reserves His scorners for perpetual fire. Hence it is, dear friends in the Lord, that I beseech you not to fail through weariness, but rather to entreat the Saviour to grant to us perseverance in that which is good. Let us trust His unbounded goodness that He will liberate His word and give us help against Antichrist, against whom by the help of your prayers, please Christ, I will wage war with God's word for my weapon. Peace and love, advancement in all that is good, and hereafter eternal life in glory be unto you from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. i. 21-4.    <sup>2</sup> *Ib.*    <sup>3</sup> *Fruste.* For the incident, see *supra*, p. 79.

## XX. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS

*(Without date : December 1412<sup>1</sup>)*

Master John Hus, priest and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ in hope, to all the faithful who are doing penance in grace and in suffering, waiting for the Advent of the Son of God;<sup>2</sup> for the Son of God, *when He cometh with the holy angels, will render to every man according to His merits.*<sup>3</sup>

Dear friends, strengthen your hearts, since the Advent of the Lord will soon be drawing near. You know, dear friends, that the Lord Jesus hath come once already. Knowing this, ponder upon it in your hearts and stablish yourselves in grace and patience. Ponder, dear friends, upon the fact, that the Founder and Lord of the world, the Word of God, God eternal and immortal, humbled Himself and was made man for us sinners, Himself to be unto such as are faithful a faithful servant. The great Physician came to heal our monstrous wound. The Lord omnipotent came, not to put the living to death, but to raise to life the dead, and to deliver the elect from everlasting death. The King of the world and the great High Priest came to fulfil the law of God by His works. He came into the world, not to lord over it, but *to give His life a ransom for many.*<sup>4</sup> He came not as a merchantman laden with the profits of greed, and not to heap together worldly goods, but to deliver from the devil with His own blood a people

<sup>1</sup> This is labelled in the *Ep. Piissimæ* and *Mon.* "Secunda Epistola." It is, however, evidently written after his second departure from Prague (*supra*, p. 83). The text in the *Monumenta* has been hopelessly doctored. Better in Höfler, ii. 215.

<sup>2</sup> P.: *In adventu filii Dei*; read *in adventum*.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvi. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xx. 28.



that had been sold under sin. He came, the All-powerful, to suffer under Pilate's power at the hand of bishops,<sup>1</sup> priests, elders, and religious men the most cruel and shameful of deaths, and to snatch us from the power of the devil. He came not to destroy the elect, but to save them, as He Himself saith: *I am come that they may have life and may have it more abundantly,*<sup>2</sup> that they may have a life of holiness and peace, and have it more abundantly, after death, in joy eternal. It is My elect—not the proud, the fornicators, the greedy, the wrathful, the envious, the world-sick,<sup>3</sup> the foes of My word and My life—but it is My elect that hear and keep My word and suffer with Me in grace.

Such is the dignity of the Saviour's Advent! Ponder upon it, dear friends, in the depths of your hearts. Strengthen your hearts in grace and patience, if haply the Advent of the Lord leading on to judgment draws near. Stablish your hearts, dear friends, in grace, patience, and virtue. For the judgment is at hand, and the Judge is the most wise, just, and awful—wise, because His wisdom is never deceived<sup>4</sup>—just, because He is not moved aside by gift, fear, or favour. And there will come with Him the apostles, sworn to be just, and appointed here with

<sup>1</sup> *Episcopis (sic).*

<sup>2</sup> John x. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Accidiosi—i.e.*, those suffering from the mediæval and monastic vice *acedia*. It is difficult to translate, as we have lost the (Chaucerian) English equivalent, "accidie." It is significant that the Reformation *Monumenta* omits this clause. *Acedia* was much dwelt on by monastic writers as one of their besetments: A full discussion of its nature will be found in Cassian, *Instits.* x.; Aquinas, *Summa* II. ii. q. 35; Paget, *Spirit of Discipline*.

<sup>4</sup> The *Mon.* paraphrases *quem Philosophi et scientuli hujus mundi non fraudabunt*. This is characteristic of their whole text.



Him to a death that was no death. Ay, and there is at hand the judgment of a Judge most awful, at Whose bidding necessity will be laid upon all men to publish their evil deeds to the whole world,<sup>1</sup> and by Whose will their souls and bodies will be burned in everlasting fire. What He wills, He will behold<sup>2</sup>—to wit, their everlasting perdition in darkness and in the abode of devils, while they will also hear from His own lips the just sentence: *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.*<sup>3</sup> Here, then, dear friends, are the two things to be pondered—the dignity of His first Advent, the justice and awfulness of His second Advent! Strengthen your hearts in grace and in suffering. If you suffer aught, consider what I have said. *Lift up your heads*—that is, your purposes—*because your redemption draweth nigh,*<sup>4</sup> your redemption from every misery. The just Judge will call you away from it all when He utters the words: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom.*<sup>5</sup> Which kingdom may it be yours and mine withal to receive at the good pleasure of the Lord Jesus, the merciful, awful, comforting Judge, very God and man, blessed for ever. Amen.

## XXI. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE

(Without date: December 1412)

Master John Hus, in hope a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, to all His lovers. May it please God the Father, blessed for ever, to grant unto you the

<sup>1</sup> P., H.: *ad cujus nutum necessitabuntur omnes nequitias suas universo orbi propalare.*

<sup>2</sup> The text seems hopeless. P., H.: *quorum velle perditionem aeternam in tenebris ad cohabitandum demonibus intuebitur.*

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxv. 41.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxi. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxv. 34.

forgiveness of sins, confirmation in that which is good, and eternal salvation hereafter.

Dear friends, the commemoration of our Lord's Nativity is at hand. Therefore, cleanse the inward parts of your house<sup>1</sup> from sins in so far as you are able. Diligently and thankfully listen to God's word; give no heed to our carping critics who forbid you from attending the Bethlehem to listen to sermons.<sup>2</sup> Formerly, however, they used to draw you away on my account. Now they are without a reason, but assert that I have taken to flight, which I did of my own will in order to stablish the word and example of Christ. His "word"—because He said: *If they will not receive your word in one city, flee into another, and going forth out of that city shake off the dust from your feet*<sup>3</sup> as a testimony against them. And elsewhere He saith: *When you are persecuted in one city, flee into another.*<sup>4</sup> Again, when they drove Him from their midst and sought to slay Him, He several times fled; and especially when they wished to take Him, John, tenth chapter, writes how *he escaped out of their hands and went again beyond the Jordan into that place where John was baptising first, and there he abode.*<sup>5</sup> Also in chapter xiii.<sup>6</sup> the same John writes that while they were devising to put Him to death He *walked no more openly among the Jews, but he went into a country near the desert unto a city that is called Ephrem, and there he abode with his disciples. The Jews also sought for him,*<sup>7</sup> and they

<sup>1</sup> So P., H.; *Mon.*, as usual, paraphrases.

<sup>2</sup> P., H.: *ne super sermone in B. ambuletis.* Paraphased in *Mon.*, which throughout is valueless.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 24.

<sup>5</sup> John x. 39-40.

<sup>6</sup> Really John xi. 54. Hus is evidently quoting from memory.

<sup>7</sup> Inaccurately quoted from John xi. 56.

*discoursed one with another, standing in the temple: What think you, that he is not come to the festival day? And the chief princes of the priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment that if any man knew where he was he should point him out that he might be apprehended.* This is how John writes.

It is not, therefore, wonderful that I followed His example in fleeing, and that the priests are inquiring and discoursing with one another and others in like manner, as to where I am. Besides, dear friends, if I have fled in accordance with Christ's teaching, it is that I may not be an occasion of eternal damnation to the wicked and a cause of suffering and tribulation to the good, and also that madmen might not hinder the sacred work. But as for fleeing from the truth—why, I trust that the Lord will give me an opportunity of dying in the same truth.

You know that it *behoved Christ to suffer*,<sup>1</sup> as He Himself testifies, at the time appointed to Him of His Father. Therefore, hold to it firmly that it shall be done as it pleases the Lord to work with me, so that if I shall be found worthy of death, it will please Him to call me to this; but if it shall please Him to prolong my preaching to His people, why, all these things are stored up<sup>2</sup> in His power and will.

Perhaps they would be glad to see me in the city of Prague that those who are touched to the quick by holy preaching against greed, luxury, and pride might find excuse for neglecting the hours, the masses, and the other offices;<sup>3</sup> but you who are zealous for God's word, to which you are being

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Reposita sunt*; smoothed in the *Mon.*, as usual, into *situm est*.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, by resuming the interdict.



conformed, would be glad in your love to see me a neighbour, so to speak, to you, for your good.<sup>1</sup> In like manner I too would like to see you and preach God's word to you, for it is in this that the other priests also ought to show their greatest earnestness. Woe to the priests who count the word of God as naught! Woe to those who are supposed to preach and do not preach! Woe to those who hinder from preaching and hearing! But praise be to those who hear the word and keep it, for it is Christ that gives to them His indulgences, saying: *Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.*<sup>2</sup> May this blessedness and this hearing be granted to you by the good pleasure of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, eternally one God, blessed for ever. Amen.

## XXII. TO THE SAME

(December 25, 1412)

Dear friends, although I am now separated from you, because perchance I am unworthy to preach much to you, nevertheless the love which I bear towards you urges me to write at least some brief words to my loved ones.<sup>3</sup>

Lo! dear friends, to-day, as it were, an angel is saying to the shepherds: *I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people.*<sup>4</sup> And suddenly a multitude of angels breaks into praise, saying: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill!*<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hus is evidently hinting at an intended secret visit. See *supra*, p. 85, and cf. p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Verbula vestre dicam caritati.*

<sup>4</sup> Luke ii. 10; inexact.

<sup>5</sup> Luke ii. 14.



As you commemorate these things, dear friends, rejoice that to-day God is born a man, that there may be glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill. Rejoice that to-day the infinitely Mighty is born a child, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that to-day a Reconciler is born to reconcile man to God, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that to-day He is born to cleanse sinners from their sin, to deliver them from the devil's power, to save them from eternal perdition, and to bring them to eternal joy, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice with great joy that to-day is born unto us a King, to bestow in its fulness upon us the heavenly kingdom, a Bishop to grant His eternal benediction, a Father of the ages to come, to keep us as His children by His side for ever: yea, there is born a Brother beloved, a wise Master, a sure Leader, a just Judge, to the end that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice, ye wicked, that God is born as a Priest, Who hath granted to every penitent absolution from all sins, that there may be glory, etc. Rejoice that to-day the Bread of Angels—that is, God—is made the Bread of men, to revive<sup>1</sup> the starving with His Body, that there may be peace among them, and on earth, etc. Rejoice that God immortal is born, that mortal man may live for ever. Rejoice that the rich Lord of the Universe lies in a manger, like a poor man, that he may make us rich. Rejoice, dearly beloved, that what the prophets prophesied has been fulfilled, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that there is born to us a Child all-powerful, and that a

<sup>1</sup> *Refocillet.* Cf. Vulgate, 1 Reg. xvi. 23.

Son is given to us, all-wise and gracious, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Oh, dear friends, ought there to be but a moderate rejoicing over these things? Nay, a mighty joy! Indeed, the angel saith: *I bring you good tidings of great joy*, for that there is born a Redeemer from all misery, a Saviour of sinners, a Governor of His faithful ones; there is born a Comforter of the sorrowful, and there is given to us the Son of God that we may have great joy, and that there may be glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill. May it please God, born this day, to grant to us this goodwill, this peace, and withal this joy!

### XXIII. TO THE SAME<sup>1</sup>

(*Without date: January (?) 1413*)

Master John Hus, priest and servant in hope of the Lord Jesus Christ, to all the faithful ones that hear His word in the city of Prague: grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear friends, I beseech you to fail not through weariness, because I am not with you and because of my excommunication, if they carry it out. I, indeed, trust in the kindness of the Saviour that all this *will work out for good*<sup>2</sup> both to myself and you alike. Only let us guard ourselves from sin and be deeply concerned about those who thwart God and His word, supposing that they are doing right after the manner of the Jews, who crucified Christ and stoned St.

<sup>1</sup> The text of this letter is hopelessly corrupt, and the meaning in places is very obscure. The text in the *Mon.* is a mere paraphrase.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 28.

Stephen: of whom Christ, nay St. Stephen also, saith: *They know not what they do.*<sup>1</sup> Am I hurt at all because in a blasphemous back-hand fashion they preach a crusade against me,<sup>2</sup> make a covenant with Judas, throw stones at the Host, and so beget vexation for themselves? May the Lord God grant that they do not excommunicate themselves. They planned out these devices in order to frighten the simple and lead them away just as they pleased; but the Lord Almighty will give the faithful to know what it all means, so that they may recognise that it is a mere invention of their minds and not a command from the Lord: so that also they may pray for those who are in error and proclaim that they will be excommunicated of God: only they must not behave in God's temple in this blasphemous way towards those who do them no harm. They pick up stones not knowing what they mean by so doing; but they throw stones, as is recorded in their own writings,<sup>3</sup> in memory of the eternal damnation of Dathan and Abyron,<sup>4</sup> who thrust themselves into the priesthood, though of inferior dignity; and who therefore by their overthrow foreshadow the overthrow of all priests that have thrust themselves into the priesthood for the sake of riches, luxuries, and honours. They make a covenant with the sons of Judas, so that they become notable sons of Judas themselves. They are all guilty of simony, excommunicated of God, Who looks upon those whose own downfall will be caused

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiii. 34; cf. Acts vii. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Quod blasphemè modo retrogrado crucem deferunt.* The meaning is obscure, but seems determined by a complaint of Jesenicz written December 18, 1412; see *Mon.* i. 331a, *Repetitio pro defens. Hus.*

<sup>3</sup> P.: *in cutibus*; read *codicibus*.

<sup>4</sup> *Sic*, as in Vulgate, Numb. xvi. 1.



by the excommunication they themselves pronounce. And seeing that there is a multitude of people excommunicated of God, therefore it is, dear friends, that we should flee His excommunication and entreat His grace, that it may please Him to keep us in His benediction. Any other excommunication cannot harm us one whit: but rather will the Bishop Who is above all bishops<sup>1</sup> grant us His benediction, saying: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*<sup>2</sup> Which benediction, dear friends, let us pray for, seek, and await by living good lives, that we may withal abide for ever in infinite joy, through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, *who is God and man, blessed for ever.*<sup>3</sup> Amen.

## XXIV. TO THE SAME

(Without date: January (?) 1413)

Master John Hus, an unprofitable servant of God, to all the elect and to those who are zealous for the Lord Jesus Christ and His word, dwelling in the city of Prague: grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Dear friends, I greatly rejoice in this, that you constantly attend the preaching of God's word, and that the merciful Saviour is granting to you leaders powerful in the truth. May it therefore please the Almighty to bestow upon you grace, mercy, and

<sup>1</sup> There is of course a subtle reference to the Pope's excommunication in this phrase.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxv. 34; very different from Vulgate.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. ix. 5.



peace through our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; grace for your good, that you may make good progress in that same grace, in like manner as you have begun, and come to a profitable issue therein: mercy to be kept in your remembrance and gratefully received, seeing that the Eternal God, the supreme Goodness, for us sinners deigned to become man, afflicted, spat upon, shamefully entreated, condemned of His own, vilely rejected in such wise that the common people, led away by the counsel of the priests and having to choose between two, chose, instead of Jesus the innocent Saviour, a robber and villainous homicide, and placed the Saviour in such derision and shame that He uttered a lamentation in the words of Jeremiah: *Hear, I pray you, all ye people and see my sorrow.* And again: *O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow.*<sup>1</sup> Also He cried to His Father saying: *O God, why hast thou forsaken me?*<sup>2</sup> Such was indeed His cry, as He hung on the cruel and shameful cross and suffered the blasphemy of the priests, who surrounded the cross and shouted and hissed out the mocking words: *He trusted in God: let him now deliver him.*<sup>3</sup> *Vah,*<sup>4</sup> *thou that destroyest the temple of God . . . come down from the cross!*<sup>5</sup> But *His* cry was: *O God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is that cry that calls upon us to mark His boundless mercy, to suffer blasphemy in the spirit of love along with Him, and to be thankful for the mercy wherewith He redeemed us from everlasting damnation.

Such, then, is the mercy that comes to you from

<sup>1</sup> Lam. i. 14; i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 43.

<sup>4</sup> So Douai.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxvii. 40.

God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour, Who grants you also peace. Our Master, the Peacemaker, taught His disciples to be peacemakers, so that, in whatsoever house they entered, they were to say: *Peace be to you.*<sup>1</sup> When He rose from the dead and entered into the midst of them, He said: *Peace be to you.*<sup>2</sup> When, too, He was minded to depart from them to His death, He said: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.*<sup>3</sup> After His manner, therefore, I desire peace for you also, dear friends—peace to you from Him, that you may live virtuous lives and overcome the devil, the world, and the flesh—peace to you from Him, that you may love one another, ay, and *your enemies*<sup>4</sup>—peace to you, that that you may peaceably hear His word—peace to you, that you may speak with discretion—peace to you, that you may know how how to be silent with advantage. For he that hears in a humble spirit, doth not contend in a cause with malice; he that speaks with discretion, overcomes the contentious; he that keeps silence to good purpose, doth not quickly wound his conscience. For these reasons peace be unto you, grace and mercy—grace that preserves from sin; mercy that delivers from eternal fire and the peace of eternal repose in the eternal joy, which comes to all the faithful after this paltry life—from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, *to whom be praise for ever and ever.*<sup>5</sup> Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 12.<sup>2</sup> John xx. 26.<sup>3</sup> John xiv. 27.<sup>4</sup> Matt. v. 44.<sup>5</sup> Gal. i. 5.

## XXV. TO THE SYNOD OF PRAGUE IN THE YEAR 1413

(Without date: after February 6, 1413<sup>1</sup>)

*Against the Judgment of the Doctors.*<sup>2</sup>

The persons who have falsely defamed Bohemia, both before the Pope and in other quarters, or are doing so even now, declaring that in Bohemia there are many heretics or wanderers from the faith of Christ, ought by right to point out these wanderers from the faith and prove their guilt. If they fail to prove their guilt and do not withdraw their defamation of the kingdom, they ought to be punished as betrayers of the fair fame of the Bohemian people. For whereas the doctors in their judgment record that the Bohemians who utter the calumnies, are certain clergymen in Bohemia that hold views concerning the sacraments differing from the Holy Catholic Church; secondly, whereas they assert that some persons in Bohemia refuse to abide by the faith and law of the Holy Catholic Church; thirdly, whereas they assert that certain persons do not obey their prelates and persuade the people not to hold in honour the authority of the Pope, bishops, and priests (though they ought to judge as in error or a heretic a man who holds a different opinion concerning the sacraments, and refuses to think or believe as the Holy Church doth); whereas, then, the doctors assert that there are certain heretics or persons in error in Bohemia, therefore they ought to point them out clearly and prove their

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 83. It is characteristic that this letter is written in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> This *Consilium doctorum* will be found in *Doc.* 475-85. It was put in, both in Latin and Czech, on February 6.



guilt, and, failing this, to undergo punishment as guilty of defamation and betrayers of the fair fame of the kingdom of Bohemia.

The doctors also state that each person is bound to obey his prelate, provided that he command not what is really bad, or forbid what is really good. This very thing they themselves failed to do, when the Pope commanded them to elect Master Maurice into their order.<sup>1</sup> They would not obey the Pope in this matter. Moreover, they themselves and the other priests will not obey the King of Bohemia, their chief prelate,<sup>2</sup> or give a tenth, although he neither commands what is bad in itself nor forbids what is really good. His Majesty also can, by rights, give orders that the sacred offices are not to be interrupted on account of the preaching of Master Hus; and the priests ought to obey in this matter, for it is not an action bad in itself to serve God.

Furthermore, they censure the forty-five articles against the ecclesiastical order, though no one is allowed to censure an error, except the Holy Church alone. Master Stanislaus and Master Palecz formerly held and defended many of these articles, until they became afraid of the secular arm.

They state also that because they excommunicate Master Hus by the Pope's authority, he is justly excommunicated, although they know that the priests drew up the excommunication acting on false counsels.

<sup>1</sup> Mařík Rwačka (Maurice) obtained a grace from Innocent VII. giving him the degree at Prague of S.T.P. The faculty at first was unwilling to grant the demand. Mauritius was one of the deputation sent in October 1408 to the cardinals at Bologna (*supra*, p. 73). On his return he became episcopal inquisitor at Prague.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase marks the influence of Wyclif's *De Officio Regis*. Cf. *op. cit.* pp. 9-14.



Furthermore, they state that though the rector excommunicates some of the doctors, they themselves are not involved in the excommunication, thereby defaming others and exalting themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Their judgment, therefore, inasmuch as it is disgraceful, should be rejected.

XXVI. TO MASTER CHRISTIAN OF PRACHATICZ, RECTOR  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRAGUE.

(Without date: early 1413)

Worshipful rector, gracious master and father, I am greatly comforted by your letter, in which among other things you write: *Whatever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad.*<sup>2</sup> And again: *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*<sup>3</sup> From these words you infer that I am not broken, cast down, and saddened, but strengthened, uplifted, and gladdened by the tribulations of the moment and the absence of my friends. Very thankfully do I welcome this comfort, as I ponder the first sentence of the Scriptures you have quoted. For if I am *just*, nothing *whatever shall make me so sad* as to cause me to fall from the truth. But if *I live godly in Christ* and will so to do, then I must suffer persecution in Christ's name. For if *it behoved Christ to suffer and so to enter into His glory*,<sup>4</sup> it must needs be that we poor creatures should bear a cross and so imitate Him in His sufferings.

I assure you, therefore, worshipful lord rector, that persecution would never make me weary, if only I

<sup>1</sup> John of Jesenicz had already (December 18, 1412) dwelt on this See *Mon.* i. 329a.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 46 ; xxiv. 26.

did not feel my sins and the confusion of Christian people. For what harm can I suffer by the loss of this world's riches, which are but *dung*?<sup>1</sup> Or by the withdrawal of the world's favour, which makes us fall away from the path of Christ? Or by the attacks which, when humbly endured, cleanse and purify the sons of God, so that they *shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father*?<sup>2</sup> Or by the taking of my poor life, which is but death; for he that *loses his life* in this world puts death away and *finds*<sup>3</sup> his true life.

Yet men do not think of these things, being blinded by pride, fame, self-seeking, and greed; and some have been turned from the truth by fear, when there was nothing to fear. For bereft of patience, and thus of love and every virtue, they waste away in strange perplexity of mind, because they feel constrained on the one hand by their knowledge of the truth, on the other hand by the fear of losing their good name and risking their poor body even to death. I will risk my own, I trust, for the Lord Jesus, if in His mercy I have opportunity. I have no wish to live on in this evil world, if I cannot call myself and others to repentance according to God's good pleasure. This is the burden of my prayer for you also, and I beseech you in Christ Jesus, with all your fellow-members of the University, to be prepared for a battle; for the reconnoitres of Antichrist have already begun, and the fight will soon follow. The Goose also must needs flap his wings against the wings of Behemoth, and against his tail, which always conceals the abomination of the beast Antichrist. Who is the tail? The prophet showeth in the words:

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 8.<sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii. 43.<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 39.

The prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail; the aged and honourable, he is the head. The Lord shall destroy the head and the tail<sup>1</sup>—that is, the Pope<sup>2</sup> and his prophets, masters, doctors, priests, who under the false pretext of sanctity conceal the abomination of the beast. Pray, what greater abomination can there be than a harlot who should parade herself and offer herself publicly? Yes, there is the still greater abomination of the beast sitting in a place of honour and offering himself for worship to all comers, as though he were God: ready to sell whatever a man may wish to buy in matters spiritual.<sup>3</sup> Yea, he sells what he doth not possess. Woe be to me, then, if I shall not preach, weep, and write against such an abomination! Woe is me! See to it yourself also. To whom is there not woe? The *flying eagle*<sup>4</sup> cries: woe, woe, woe to the men that dwell upon the earth!

## XXVII. TO THE SAME

(Without date: after April 1413<sup>5</sup>)

Greetings from the Lord Jesus Christ! Christ the Lord helping me, I will not accept the judgment of the theological faculty, though I stand before a fire prepared for me. I hope that death will take either

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ix. 15, 14. This is a favourite thought in the writings of the times: cf. Miliez, *Anatomia Antichristi* (in *Mon.* i. 362b.); also *Sermones de Antichristo*, *ib.* ii. 82 (both works wrongly attributed to Hus); cf. Wyclif, *De Antichristo*, l. i. c. ix. (in *Op. Evang.* iii. 34).

<sup>2</sup> Wyclif calls the Pope "caput Antichristi" in *Polem. Works*, i. 243, *Triologus*, 424.

<sup>3</sup> The allusion in this strong language is of course to John XXIII.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. iv. 7. Cf. *De Evangelica Perfectione*, c. i., in *Mon.* i. 479a, in which we have a lengthy allegorical interpretation of the "flying eagle."

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.* after the fruitless meeting at the house of Christian; see p. 84.



me or the two who have deserted the truth, to heaven or to hell, before I agree with their views. For I know that both in previous times loyally confessed the truth according to Christ's gospel; but, stricken with terror, they turned to flattery of the Pope and to lies. Palecz calls us Wyclifists,<sup>1</sup> as if we were straying from the entire faith of Christendom, and Stanislaus calls us infidels, traitors, madmen, and an accursed clergy. But I would pay no heed to this, provided they were not confirming Anti-christ in his wickedness. But I hope with God's grace, if needs be, to set myself against them even to the lighting of a fire. And if I cannot deliver the truth in spite of all I do, at least I refuse to be the enemy of the truth and will resist to the death all agreement with falsehood. Let the world run its course, as God permits. It is better to die well than to live badly. We must not sin to avoid the punishment of death. To end in grace the present life is to be banished from misery. He that adds knowledge, adds labour. He that speaks the truth, is smitten on his own head. He that fears death, loses the joys of life. Above all else, truth is conqueror. He conquers, who is slain: for no adversity hurts him if no iniquity hath dominion over him. For the apostle Peter saith: *Who is he that can hurt you, if you be zealous of good?*<sup>2</sup> *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you,*<sup>3</sup> saith the Truth. *My brethren, count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations:*<sup>4</sup> *blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved he*

<sup>1</sup> Loserth has shown (*Wyclif and Hus*, pp. 83-5) that until after the death of Hus this was the usual title of the Bohemian reformers.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Jas. i. 2.



*shall receive the crown of life.*<sup>1</sup> These are my foundations: these the dishes with which my spirit is revived so that I may be courageous against all adversaries of the truth.

As for these doctors whom you mention, they refuse to act against their consciences. You know how Palecz used to talk in the old days at your house. And I know for a fact that Stanislaus held the remanence of the bread and recorded his views in a treatise; and he asked me before he began this disturbance if I would hold the same view along with him.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently he swore to it and then abjured it; and two years afterwards,<sup>3</sup> when Stiekna came with his treatise,<sup>4</sup> in his terror of the Archbishop and not knowing how to escape, he asserted on oath that he had not finished the treatise. Before he was summoned to the Archbishop's court, he said, "The monk Stiekna must go on his knees before me and beg for his life, because he dared to charge my treatise with being a fresh graft of heresy." How, then, can I believe that they would not be ready to act against their consciences? Is it to save their consciences that they call us

<sup>1</sup> James i. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, in 1405.

<sup>4</sup> John of Stiekna was a Cistercian monk long confused by historians with the reforming preacher of Prague, Conrad of Waldhausen. In one of his sermons for the Commemoration Day of Charles IV., Hus speaks of him as 'the excellent preacher with the trumpet voice' (*Mon.* ii. 41*b*). Of his strong nationalist sympathies we have evidence in his association in 1397 with the citizen Crux as one of the proctors of Queen Hedwig's Polish College; while at one time, it would appear, he was a preacher at the Bethlehem. But in later years his sympathies with the reforming party cooled down. It is said, though the evidence is somewhat doubtful, that in 1393 he championed one of Boniface's indulgences, while Hus tells us here of his later antagonism to Wyclif's doctrine. Stiekna's treatise is now lost.

infidels, traitors, madmen, wanderers from the entire faith of Christ, and an accursed clergy? Let God be the judge of this.

As to your proposed change of benefice. It seems to me in all conscience you should on no account give it up; for I hope that you are a shield where you are, against Antichrist. It is on this account in my judgment that God hath decreed that, as there was a rector in that parish who was the greatest enemy of the truth, so you, on the other side, should be the friend of God's word. As to the parochial clergy and their unwillingness to receive gratefully all the spiritual oversight which they enjoy, you have in Ezekiel, chapter iii.,<sup>1</sup> a full verdict for your own justification. Read the passage. I will write to those whose names you give, and I will forward you the treatise, pending their reply to the charges of Stanislaus. Farewell in Christ Jesus. I think I sinned in giving up my preaching at the King's wish: therefore I am not willing to live any longer in this sin.

### XXVIII. TO THE SAME

(Without date: after April 1413)

Greetings from Christ Jesus, the true Head of the Church;<sup>2</sup> for He it is that truly gives to His members spiritually to live, move, and have their being, since it is *in Himself that we live, move, and are*, as Paul asserted in the schools of Athens before the philosophers (Acts 2a).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. iii. 4-8.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence strikes the keynote of the letter; not the Pope, but Christ.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, xvii. 28. Hus was quoting by the pagination of a folio MS.

My lord rector, you have put this among the chief points—namely, whether I am willing to agree to the proposition that the Pope is the head of the Holy Roman Church, and the cardinals the body, and, further, to abide by all the rulings and decisions of the Holy Roman Church.<sup>1</sup> Truly here *latet anguis in herba!*<sup>2</sup> For if the Pope is the head of the Roman Church and the cardinals the body, then they in themselves form the entire Holy Roman Church, as the entire body of man with the head is the man.<sup>3</sup> In fact, its own disciples, the satellites of Antichrist, use interchangeably the expressions "Holy Roman Church" and "Pope and cardinals." Suppose that Satan incarnate, together with twelve of his proudest devils, were to sit in Peter's place, and suppose that his rule and first principle were that whatever he and his monstrous body laid down must be held as the faith! For this was how the devil tempted Christ, declaring that he had power to grant to Him all the kingdoms of the world, if He would fall down and worship him.<sup>4</sup> It is passing strange, moreover, that the disciples of Antichrist now wish to lay down a ruling in the matter of the sacraments. Hath not the Church existed for 1413 years without this ruling which is now to be? I am aware that they wrote to the Curia about the

<sup>1</sup> The two chief demands of the theological faculty at the meeting of both parties before the Commission; see p. 84. The second demand is not accurately given by Hus, who leaves out the qualifying phrase 'in omni materia catholica.' See *Doe*. 508.

<sup>2</sup> Virgil, *Ecl.* 3, 93. Hus's humanistic touches are rare.

<sup>3</sup> This argument is expanded in Hus's *De Ecclesia*, cc. 7, 13, 15, the main theses of which are taken from Wyclif's *De Ecclesia*, pp. 5, 14, 31, 86, 92, 93. See also Hus's *Responsio ad Stanislaw*, c. 2 (*Mon.* i. 267b).

<sup>4</sup> Matt. iv. 9



judgment of the doctors and the prelates. They reserve these matters for Antichrist's assent, in order to lead us astray. They admit him to be the more important, that<sup>1</sup> they may reach this conclusion: "You are a heretic! For it follows that whatever the Holy Roman Church rules (that is, the Pope along with the cardinals) must be held as the faith; but the Pope, along with his associates, rules that indulgences 'by pocket and purse'<sup>2</sup> are Catholic: therefore this must be held as the faith. But you, Hus, have preached the opposite. Abjure, therefore, your heresy, or be burned."

Item, whatever the Pope rules, etc. But he rules that Hus is an obstinate fellow under ban of excommunication, and thus is a heretic. Therefore he must be condemned.

Item, whatever the Pope rules, etc. But the Pope rules that the decision of the doctors, *alias* the enemies of the truth, arrived at in the court, is just and holy. Therefore it must hold good.<sup>3</sup>

Item, whatever the Pope rules must hold good. But the Pope rules that all who have Wyclif's books should give them up to be burnt, and must abjure. Therefore this also we must hold.<sup>4</sup>

Item, whatever the Pope rules, etc. But the Pope rules by an edict that preaching is not to take place in any chapel. Therefore, etc.<sup>5</sup>

Item, whatever the Pope rules must hold good.

<sup>1</sup> P.: *et concludant*; read *ut*.

<sup>2</sup> *A pera et a bursa*, a parody of *a pena et culpa*, which, as a matter of fact, was not in the indulgence in this bare form. See Lea, *Hist. Auricular Confession*, iii. 54-80, and cf. *Mon.* i. 171-91, for further strictures by Hus.

<sup>3</sup> P. 83

<sup>4</sup> P. 26.

<sup>5</sup> P. 26.

But Boniface with the cardinals solemnly decreed that Wenzel, King of Bohemia, is not King of the Romans, nor Sigismund of the Hungarians. Therefore we must hold this.<sup>1</sup>

And which of us can search out the number of decisions that Antichrist might aim at us at his own sweet will? Thus I observe that the doctors would like to compare Christ to Belial, on the ground, however, that Christ doth not nominate the head of the Holy Church. So also they make no mention of Christ in their written judgment. I should like to know if Pope Liberius the heretic,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On August 11, 1400, the four Rhenish electors met at LoehNSTein, and decreed the deposition of Wenzel from the empire, and on August 21 chose the Palatine Rupert in his place. Boniface IX. at first hesitated to commit himself to Rupert; but on the imprisonment of Sigismund by his Hungarian subjects (1401), Boniface felt free to drive a hard bargain with Rupert for his recognition. At the end of May 1403 Boniface declared Ladislaus of Naples to be the King of Hungary, and in the August of 1403 formally deposed Wenzel.

<sup>2</sup> A favourite argument with Hus, who repeats these illustrations, especially that of Pope Joan, more than once—*e.g.*, in his *De Ecclesia* (*Mon.* i. 207a, 220a, 221a), *Responsio ad Stanislaw* (*Mon.* i. 271a, 274b, 277d). He gives his authority as 'Cestrensis, lib. 4, c. 14; lib. 5, c. 3'—*i.e.*, the *Polychronicon* of Ralph Higden († ca. 1363), a monk of Chester. Hus would be introduced to Higden by Wyclif (*cf. De Officio Regis*, pp. 128, 146), but appears to have actually read this for himself—at any rate, I cannot put my finger on the connecting link, though the inaccuracy of the references (which should be iv. c. 14, v. c. 32) would point to one. *Cf. infra*, p. 131, n. 4.

Liberius, who was appointed Pope on May 22, 352, lapsed into semi-Arianism in the winter of 357-8, though it is difficult to settle precisely which of the many Arian formulas of the time he accepted. Before his death (September 24, 366) he returned to full orthodoxy. For the myth of Pope Joan—Agnes, as Hus calls her—see Döllinger, *Fables respecting Popes during M.A.*, 1-67. As to Joan, whom Hus describes, following Higden, as an 'Anglicus' from Mainz, Hus would meet no opposition. Gerson had used the illustration himself (see *Op. Gerz.* ii. 71), and Dietrich of Niem mentions the very school in which she taught.

Leo the heretic, and Pope John,<sup>1</sup> who was delivered of a boy, were the heads of the Roman Church. If that be the case, then it matters not if some time afterwards a harlot or an Antichrist of the first order should be the head of the Holy Roman Church. Then, of course, Antichrist wishes to be placed on an equality with Christ. But *what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?*<sup>2</sup> It is not sufficient for him and his satraps<sup>3</sup> that he is Christ's vicar (at all events, if he strenuously fulfils Christ's law), and that they themselves are the ministers of the Church, performing regularly the duty of preaching the gospel after the manner of the holy apostles, who claimed to be the ministers given to the Church to teach the very law of Christ.

I would like to see the argument of that doctor<sup>4</sup>— what he would prove by the fact that Christ was the Head of the Church, as without doubt He was, for the three days He was in the tomb.<sup>5</sup> For from the beginning of His incarnate life He was the essential Head of the Church by virtue of His humanity,<sup>6</sup> which He did not lay aside during the three days.<sup>7</sup> The consequence was that he was the Head of the Holy Church for three days, as being the most worthy Person in the human race, excelling the

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, Joan, whose papal name was supposed to be John VIII., and whose date was given as between Leo IV. (855) and Benedict IV. (858).

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 15.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 50, n. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Stanislaus.

<sup>5</sup> An argument taken from Wyclif's *De Ecclesia*, p. 403.

<sup>6</sup> See Thom. Aquinas, *Op.* v. 51 (ed. Venet., 1774), and compare Wyclif, *De Eccles.* 132.

<sup>7</sup> Wyclif dwells on this in his *De Benedicta Incarnacione*, cc. 3 and 4. The humanity of Christ was one of Wyclif's strong points, in the clear realisation of which he seems more modern than mediæval.



angels and all men, and the holy fathers in Limbo, who were all members of the Church, and who were led forth by their Head behind Himself from Limbo, and thereafter placed by Him in glory.<sup>1</sup> The virgin mother of Christ was then in a sense the Church militant in her own person by virtue of her faith and love.<sup>2</sup> Now, she had more worth than all the apostles, and consequently more than all the prelates of to-day, including the Pope.

As for the dictum of the doctor that the Catholic Apostolic Church and the Roman Church are one and the same: if by the "Roman Church" is understood the Church universal of which the apostles form a part, then it is true. If, however, "Roman Church" means in that context "Pope along with the cardinals," then the Roman Church is not identical with the Catholic Apostolic Church, just as no partial Church is the universal Holy Apostolic Church.

I would like the doctors to tell me what the Roman Church stands for in the passage where (Cause 24, question 1, chapter headed "This is the Faith"),<sup>3</sup> on the authority of Jerome, the Holy Roman Church is said to be that which has remained ever immaculate, and in the providence of the Lord and by the help of the blessed apostle Peter will abide for all time unviolated by heretics.<sup>4</sup> For there it cannot

<sup>1</sup> The famous mediæval conception of the harrowing of hell.

<sup>2</sup> Idea repeated in *Responsio ad Stanislai* (*Mon.* i. 285a).

<sup>3</sup> Repeated by Hus in his *De Eccles.* (*Mon.* i. 207a). In both cases it is taken word for word from Wyclif's *De Eccles.* p. 87, who quotes Gratian's *Decretum*, ii. C. 24, q. 1, cc. 6 and 14. Hus, in his *De Eccles.*, gives, as often, a wrong reference.

<sup>4</sup> Hus, following Wyclif, who borrows from Gratian, who copied "Polycarp," is wrong in attributing this to Jerome's *Ad Damasum*

stand for the Pope and the cardinals, seeing that they are stained with more vices than other men, as Stanislaus and Palecz bore witness. There have been many heretical popes, and many of very doubtful character. A woman hath sat in the chief seat of the Church. How, then, hath the Roman Church—that is, cardinals and Pope—remained always without a blemish?<sup>1</sup> Would that the disciples of Antichrist were content to believe that the Holy Roman Church is the whole body of Christ's faithful saints militant in the faith of Christ!<sup>2</sup> This doctrine Peter, Bishop of Rome, and, above all, Christ, the Bishop of our souls, taught. Though we could conceive of Rome as overthrown, Pope and cardinals included, as completely as Sodom, still the Holy Church would remain. . . .<sup>3</sup>

### XXIX. TO THE SAME

(Without date: 1413)

I wish to abide by this: I hold the Pope to be Christ's Vicar in the Roman Church; but it is not the whole of my faith. Item, I abide by this: if the Pope is predestinate and in the exercise of the pastoral office follows Christ in his own life, then he is the head of so much of the Church Militant as he rules over; and if he accordingly rules as head over what is now the entire Church Militant

*in expositione symboli.* The sentence is really from the *Epistola Marci Pape ad Athanasium*. The last clause should run: *manebit, . . . insullatione firma et immobilis omni tempore persisteret*, and not as in Hus. See also Richter-Friedberg, *Corp. Jur. Can.* i. 970.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wyclif, *De Eccles.* 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 86 *et passim*.

<sup>3</sup> The letter seems incomplete.

according to Christ's law, then he is the true representative of the Supreme Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. If, however, his life is contrary to Christ, then he is a thief and robber climbing up another way<sup>1</sup> and is a ravenous wolf, a hypocrite and at this moment among all the pilgrims<sup>2</sup> the chief Antichrist.<sup>3</sup> They ought therefore, according to the forewarning of Christ, to beware of such a wolf and attend to the prophecy of Christ, Who said: *If any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ or there, do not believe him.* And why? *For there shall arise false Christs—that is, popes bearing Christ's name—and shall show great signs.* There shall arise *false prophets—that is, the doctors of the popes—and shall show great signs and wonders in so much as to deceive (if possible) even the elect.*<sup>4</sup> Blessed therefore is he that shall not be afraid of their terrors that come as lightning from heaven—that is, excommunications whereby they terrify the righteous and provoke marvelling among the peoples; nor of their wonders—that is, miracles wrought at a distance (for they act from the Roman Curia to Prague, a distance of two hundred miles!<sup>5</sup>) such as neither Simon Magus nor the apostle Peter wrought. Blessed is he that considers *the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place. He that readeth, let him understand,*<sup>6</sup> saith Christ, the Head of the Church. For what greater abomination can there be in the holy place—that is,

<sup>1</sup> John x. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Viantes*. This word and *viator* are common mediæval words for Christians.

<sup>3</sup> Loserth (*W. & H.* 257) has pointed out that this passage is compounded from Wyclif's *Triologus*, 423 and 454, and his *De Xto et Adversario*, c. viii. (*Polem. Works*, ii. 673). See also his *De Eccles.* 19.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiv. 23, 24.    <sup>5</sup> *i.e.*, German miles.    <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxiv. 15.



the holy office—than that in the place—that is, the sanctity—where the holiest, most gracious, gentlest, humblest, poorest, most untiring, most patient, most chaste of all men hath sat, there is now sitting one in name the holiest, but in reality the worst, the most cruel, the most vengeful, the proudest, the richest in this world's wealth, the most indolent,<sup>1</sup> the most impatient, and the most unclean?<sup>2</sup> Is it not an abomination of desolation in a place apart? Truly is Christ set forth by the false prophets to be in a desert place, which is left forlorn of all the virtues. Christ the Lord prophesied and forewarned His own: *When you shall see the abomination in the holy place: he that readeth, let him understand.* And afterwards: *If they shall say to you, behold Christ (sic) is in the desert, believe it not: go ye not out*<sup>3</sup>—that is, from the right faith which I have declared to you—saying that he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven who is the more humble; and he that exalteth himself, is the more abased.<sup>4</sup> Believe not everything which the false prophets shall say to you when they set forth that Christ in person sits at Rome as the Head of the Church. *Blessed is that man who shall not be offended!*<sup>5</sup>

Item, I abide by this: whatever the Holy Roman Church or the Pope along with the cardinals shall decree or order to be held or done according to Christ's law, *that* in a humble spirit, as a faithful Christian, I wish to respect and reverently accept.

<sup>1</sup> John XXIII. The passage is valuable as showing the popular estimate. But before his excommunication by John, Hus gave no sign that he knew that he was dealing with a moral monster. See p. 51, and for the character of John, my *Age of Hus*, App. C.

<sup>2</sup> *Accidiosissimus*; see note on *accidia*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Luke vii. 23.

But *not* whatever the Pope along with the cardinals hath laid down or ordered universally.<sup>1</sup> For I have taken up the opposite position and abide by it: it is for this reason, as you know, that I am now under excommunication.

Hostiensis<sup>2</sup> in his gloss on the fifth chapter of the decretals ('*A nobis*'<sup>3</sup>) holds that the Pope (as also the whole Roman Curia) can err in the way of morality, just as he often errs in his judgment of the truth. I hold boldly to his reading. For if the twelve apostles erred in their judgment of the truth and in the way of morality, how is it that the Pope and cardinals cannot fail in their judgment of the truth and in the way of morality? This actually happened when Pope John—the woman Agnes<sup>4</sup>—and all the cardinals, nay, those belonging to the Roman Church, were deceived in the judgment of the truth: for this same John, Agnes herself, said she was the

<sup>1</sup> This is really the central position of Wyclifism, and springs from the further position that character makes office. Cf. Wyclif, *De Eccles.* 34, and cf. *Doc.* 299, 301. At Constance Hus tried to defend it by a fine distinction between *quoad meritum* and *quoad officium* (*infra*, p. 217). The whole position, of course, was absolutely incompatible with Romanism.

<sup>2</sup> Henry de Segusia, cardinal of Ostia (d. 1271), was the greatest canonist of the Middle Ages. On his relations with England, see Matt. Paris, *Chron. Maj.* iv. 33, 286, 351, 353. His work is entitled *Summa aurea super titulis decretalium* (ed. Basel 1573 or Venice 1605). See lib. v. *De Penitentiiis et Remissionibus*, § 15, 'Papa potest peccare.'

<sup>3</sup> The decretal '*A nobis*' is dated May 6, 1199. See Richter-Friedberg, *Corp. Jur. Canon.* ii. 899, and cf. Wyclif, *De Xto et Adv.* (*Polem. Works*, ii. 676). Hus's attention to Hostiensis' comment would be drawn by Wyclif's *De Ecclesia*, 522.

<sup>4</sup> Wyclif in his *Cruciata* calls her 'Anna' (*Polem. Works*, ii. 619), nor does he mention 'Cestrensis.' This again adds weight to the supposition that in this matter Hus was not following Wyclif. See p. 125, n. 2.

Holy Father; and the cardinals, together with the others, affirmed that very same thing. May Christ Jesus then be blessed for having suffered this to take place in His Church for our instruction and warning!

### XXX. TO THE SAME

(Without date: end of April (?) 1413<sup>1</sup>)

Worshipful lord rector, reverend father and master! I do not believe that the schism of the people can be lulled to sleep: for Christ's prophecy must needs be fulfilled, *Who came not to send peace, but a sword, to separate father from son and mother from daughter, etc.*<sup>2</sup> The prophecy of Paul also saith that *the son of iniquity shall not be accomplished unless there came a schism first.*<sup>3</sup> As to the disgrace of the king and his kingdom,<sup>4</sup> what matters it to us, if the king is good, and provided at least some of his subjects are good? Christ in His earthly course suffered deep disgrace along with His elect, to whom He said: *They will put you out of the synagogues, and will slay some of you, thinking that they are doing a service to God.*<sup>5</sup> *And you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake,*<sup>6</sup> you shall be delivered up by parents and kinsfolk. Now this is worse than to suffer at the hands of Stanislaus and Palecz! But as to my victory, it depends not

<sup>1</sup> This letter should be compared with the *Responsio ad Scripta Stanislai* in *Mon.* i. 265 ff., some arguments of which Hus here condenses. Its date is evidently after the fruitless conference of April and before the banishment of Stanislaus or the election of the new rector; cf. inscription in MS. 'M° X° protunc rectori.'

<sup>2</sup> Luke x. 34.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> By the rumour of heresy.

<sup>5</sup> John xvi. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 22.



on the world's good report; for I know that he is conqueror, who is slain.

You know the subject-matter of the dispute: first, the condemnation of the articles; secondly, as you have heard, the robbery connected with the indulgences; and now a third objection has been added by the counsel of the Pharisees.<sup>1</sup> In the first place, it is concerned with the point that my fellow-preachers and I are a pestiferous set of clerks, in error as to the sacraments; secondly, with the heretical dictum, "There cannot be found or given upon earth any other successors of that order than the Pope, who is head, and the College of Cardinals, which is the body of the Roman Church"; thirdly, with this point of the judgment, "The Pope is the head, while the College of Cardinals is the body, being clearly the true successors of the chief of the apostles"; and fourthly with this point, "The Apostolic Seat—that is, the Pope with the cardinals of the Roman Church and his prelates—must be obeyed in everything whatsoever, if what is purely good is not forbidden nor what is purely evil enjoined." By God's grace I trust I have never disseminated such gross errors, nor ever will do so! For what can be a greater exaltation of Antichrist above all we speak of as God—that is, above the deity and humanity of Christ—than to say that God cannot have any other successors in His Church than the Pope along with his cardinals? If they had laid it down that God cannot have worse people belonging to His Church than the Pope and the cardinals, they would have had greater evidence for their words.

<sup>1</sup> *In consilio*. Perhaps we should read *in concilio*, with a reference to the Synod.

Methinks therefore that God from time to time by their inventions reveals to us Antichrist and his disciples. But He will give to us knowledge and a spirit of courage to wage war on all such deceivers !

In Letter XXXI. we are reminded of the connection of Hus with that stormy petrel of the Bohemian Reformation, Jerome of Prague. The incessant travels of this rich young noble would take us far afield. The results of his journey to Oxford we have already seen (p. 8). Wherever he went, his militant Wyclifism brought him into trouble with the authorities. In Paris, Gerson the Chancellor was taking measures for his arrest when he 'secretly slipped away'; on a second visit to Oxford in 1407-8, he was charged with heresy, and only obtained his release through the intercession of Prague. Similar troubles and similar escapes attended his visits to Buda-Pesth (October 1410), to Lithuania (March 1411), and Cracow (March 1413).

This was not the first time that Jerome had met with opposition at Vienna. In September 1410 we hear of his preaching Lollardism in that newly founded University, and being excommunicated by the clergy of St. Stephen's. But on September 12 he escaped, 'like a sparrow from the net of the fowlers,' to the castle of Bietow, in Moravia, which belonged to a friend of Hus. Whether Jerome had recently visited Vienna it is impossible to say, but on his arrival, in March 1413, at Cracow at the court of Ladislaus of Poland (Jagiello), he found letters of accusation from the University already awaiting him. Jerome, who had allowed his beard to grow in Lithuania, shaved, and presented his passports to Ladislaus, clothed in the red gown of his degree, but in a few days, at the instance of the clergy, was put over the frontier 'that he might plough in his own country, for our soil seems too dry to receive his seed' (*Doc.* 506).

Between the Czech University of Prague and the German University at Vienna, which owed its somewhat struggling existence to the jealousy of the Habsburgs, little love was lost at any time, nor was the rivalry lessened by Prague's expulsion of the Germans. On the occasion of Jerome's first trouble at Vienna, the University of Prague had at once petitioned the civil authorities for his protection (September 3, 1410). Now the new rector, Michael Malenicz, hastened to support the letter of Hus

by a letter dated a week later (July 8, 1413), the similarity of whose language<sup>1</sup> shows that it was inspired by Hus.

The text of this letter in Palacký and Höfler differs considerably; and, on the whole, the better readings will be found in Höfler (ii. 209). To some of the differences we draw attention in the notes.

### XXXI. TO MASTER JOHN SYBART<sup>2</sup> IN THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

(July 1, 1413)

He deserveth no greeting, who defames his neighbours with grievous falsehoods, but is marked out as one worthy of correction, that, when his falsehood is recognised by him, he may the more quickly turn into the way of charity. To think that you are a professor, not of theology, but of lying information! Why do you state<sup>3</sup> that Master Jerome is not the least of the disseminators of heresy when you know nothing about his beliefs? Why do you add the notorious lie that he went on a visit to the King of Cracow and to his brother in order to subvert their views? Are you a searcher of hearts? Do you know a man's mind at such a distance?<sup>4</sup> Are you a professor of Christ's law, when you defame your neighbour with a lie? It must be Antichrist who hath taught you to talk in this mad strain. What of Christ's law, *Judge not, and you shall not be*

<sup>1</sup> See *Doc.* 512.

<sup>2</sup> Höfler (ii. 209) calls him 'Sigwort de Septemcastris.' But for the name, see *Doc.* 512. That he was from Siebenburgen (Transylvania) we may well believe. See *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to the Bishop and Chapter of Zagrab (Agram) (see *Doc.* 512), whose bishop appears to have been from Siebenburgen; see Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica*, or Gams, *s.v.*

<sup>4</sup> Read with H.: *Numquid . . . cordium? Per tantam, etc.*



judged?<sup>1</sup> What of this: *If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him?*<sup>2</sup> Why, instead of giving your brother in the first place a loving reproof by yourself alone, you publish a damaging calumny!<sup>3</sup> And you have had the audacity to put your sharp teeth not only into an honourable master, but into great communities. Bohemia did not suffice you but you must fix a charge of heresy (which I trust is a false charge) upon the Slavonic people before the students with diabolical rashness, and with no first-hand knowledge. Judging the hidden things of the heart (forsooth!), you wrote that they were "heresiarchs and schismatics,<sup>4</sup> carrying honey on their lips and holding the fatal poison of asps in their hearts."<sup>5</sup> This is the way you unjustly judge your neighbours, supposing also that they are attempting to stir up a mad revolt against the clergy. God is standing ready to judge. Granted that in name you are a professor of theology, yet if you do not in very deed confess the truth and do penance for this offence, you will have to give an account for every word to the strictest<sup>6</sup> of all judges. Is it part of your professorial calling<sup>7</sup> to fall into confusion as to individuals, to charge your brothers with heresy, and to gather together lies in different quarters against your neighbours? Surely you have been badly instructed in the theology of love! May God grant you the spirit of truth to speak that which is holy and right

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xvii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Read with H. : *injuriosa diffamatio*. <sup>4</sup> P. omits.

<sup>5</sup> Evidently a quotation from the letter (see *Doc.* 512).

<sup>6</sup> P. : *districtissimo*. H. : *discretissimo*.

<sup>7</sup> H. : *Estne professoris in officio personas confundere*. P. : *Es ne tu professor, in incerto personas confundere*.

before the Lord and not what is calumnious and defamatory, the offspring of the spirit of falsehood and error. I am writing without words of flattery, to prevent you sowing the seeds of detraction and scandal among your neighbours, and from the desire that you may abstain from such behaviour and do penance for the offences you have committed. Written on the octave of John Baptist, by the hands of Master John Hus, in hope a servant of Jesus Christ.

### XXXII. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE

(*Without date: early in 1414*<sup>1</sup>)

Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. Thus saith the Lord God in the verses of the holy Jeremiah: *Stand ye on the ways and hear and ask for the old paths, which is the good way, and walk ye in it, and ye shall find refreshment for your souls.*<sup>2</sup> Stand ye in the ways of God, which are the great humility of the Lord Jesus Christ, His mercy, patience, and toilsome life, afflicted and sorrowing even to His foul death; for the blessed Saviour Himself saith: *Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart.*<sup>3</sup> And in another place He saith: *I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.*<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the Lord Jesus obeyed His Father even unto death: surely, then, there is all the more fitness for us sinners to do so. Stand in the ways, constantly asking which are

<sup>1</sup> For the gap in the correspondence, see pp. 86 and 139. Hus at this time was often in Prague. This letter is in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. vi. 16. Vulgate reads *videte*, not as Hus, *audite*.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xi. 29.

<sup>4</sup> John xiii. 15.

those that lead from eternal death to eternal life, and from misery to eternal joy. And this way is the gospel of the Lord Almighty, the apostolic epistles, the Old Testament, the lives also of the saints which are contained in the sacred letters, saints who shine forth in their lives as the sun, moon, and stars. Therefore, dear brothers and dear sisters in the Lord God, I beg you by the martyrdom of God's Son gladly to attend the preaching, to gather together and hear it diligently; to understand as ye hear, to observe as ye understand; to learn as ye observe; as ye learn well, to know your well-beloved Saviour (for to know God is the perfect righteousness); as ye know Him, to love Him with all your heart, and with all your will, and your neighbour as yourselves; and as ye love Him, to rejoice with Him, world without end. Amen.

For on these two commands hangs the entire law, old and new. Stand in the way and hear, that you may show a noble penitence; for thus will you attain the heavenly kingdom. For true penitence is health of the soul and restorer of virtue; as St. Bernard testifies, saying: *O Penitence, health of the soul, restorer of virtue, scatterer of sins, overthrower of hell, gate of heaven, way of the righteous and satisfaction of the blessed.*<sup>1</sup> Oh, right blessed is he that loves the penitence of the saintly life and keeps it unto the end of his days! Stand in the way of God, dear brothers, ever moving forward in the holy life. Cease not to do well: for when the time shall come, you will live in heaven for ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> I have not traced this quotation, or its source.



## Part IV.—Letters Written on the Journey to Constance

(August—November, 1414.)

ON October 30, 1413, Sigismund, at that time at Como, had summoned, as 'the defender and advocate of the Church,' all princes and prelates to a General Council to be held at Constance on November 1, 1414. The affairs of Christendom which led to the calling of this Council, the failure of the Council of Pisa, the ambition of Sigismund, and the struggles of the three rival Popes, must not now detain us. But it is important for the student of the life of Hus to realise that when Sigismund summoned this most momentous Council the termination of the schism was not his only object. As heir to the throne of Bohemia, he felt the need of removing from the land the stain of heresy. He realised keenly that 'throughout the whole earth resounded the rumour that the Bohemians are sons of heretical baseness.' Unfortunately, but one letter of Hus for the year between Sigismund's summoning of the Council and the following August has been preserved for us (*supra*, p. 137). A fuller correspondence would have been invaluable in giving us some insight into the popular anticipations as regards this great event.

Whatever steps Wenzel might take, Sigismund, as the heir to Wenzel's domains, determined to bring the matter before the Council. He was persuaded that the affair could be peaceably settled, and that he would win the gratitude of Bohemia. He accordingly despatched from Friuli, in Lombardy, three of his court to bid Hus present himself at Constance, and to act as his escort. The good intentions of Sigismund are evident in his choice. John of Chlum, surnamed Kepka, and Wenzel of Leštna, of the house of Duba, were both adherents of Hus, who had served with Sigismund in 1413 in his Venetian war. The third, Henry Chlum of Laccembok, was John of Chlum's uncle. Sigismund also promised that he would obtain for Hus a full hearing and send him a safe conduct 'written in Latin and German.'

Hus at once prepared to obey. In view of his own appeal to a General Council, he could not do otherwise. He was too unconscious of his real dissent from Rome to know the risks he ran. His next move was not without worldly wisdom. On August 26, 1414, he posted up notices in Latin and Czech throughout the whole of Prague offering 'to render an account of his faith and hope' before the Synod that would open on the following day. Numerous copies of this notice have been preserved. The Latin *Notice*<sup>1</sup> ran as follows:—

#### NOTICE TO THE SYNOD

Master John of Husinecz, bachelor of divinity,<sup>2</sup> is ready to appear before the most reverend father, Conrad, Archbishop of Prague, legate of the Apostolic Seat, at the next convocation of all the prelates and clergy of the kingdom of Bohemia, being at all times prepared to give an account of the faith and hope that is in him to the satisfaction of all who may inquire of him thereof; and, moreover, to see and to hear each and all who have a mind to charge him with obstinacy in error or with any heresy whatsoever, in order that they may render themselves liable in that same place, according to the requirements of the law of God and of justice, to the penalty

<sup>1</sup> The Czech *Notice* is similar, but differs in the conclusion: '... And if any one is able to prefer a charge of error or heresy against me, let him get ready to set out thither, that he may accuse me there, after giving out his name before the aforesaid Council. It will give me no trouble to reply in due order as to the truths I hold, both to small and great. Therefore, good sirs, lovers of justice, consider carefully whether I make any demand in this letter which is contrary to divine or human law. If, however, I shall not be allowed a hearing, let it be known to the whole kingdom of Bohemia that this occurs through no fault of mine.'

<sup>2</sup> *Baccalarius formatus*, the technical term for a bachelor of divinity who had read Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, but not yet incepted as a regent. See, e.g., *Chartularium Univ. Paris*, ii. 700, and for Oxford, *Munimenta Acad.* (R.S.), 392, 395-6.

of retaliation, if they fail legally to prove against him obstinacy in error or heresy.<sup>1</sup> To all which charges before the said Archbishop and prelates, and withal at the next General Council in Constance, he is ready with God's help to reply, to abide by the law, and, in Christ's name, to prove his innocence according to the decrees and canons of the holy fathers. Given on Sunday following the feast of St. Bartholomew.<sup>2</sup>

On the refusal of the Synod to receive either Hus or his proctor, Jesenicz, Hus on August 30 once more posted up notices on the door of the royal palace and throughout all Prague stating his future intentions.

#### APPEAL TO THE COURT

To his Majesty, to the Queen, to their advisers, the Prefect of the court, and the whole court.<sup>3</sup>

I, Master John Hus, do hereby make known and declare that, whereas I did clearly learn from certain persons that a letter was sent by the Pope to his Majesty (though I knew not by whom it was transcribed), wherein his Majesty was advised zealously to weed out of his kingdom of Bohemia all budding heretics, and whereas, as I put my trust in God, it was without fault of my own that a rumour of that kind did arise, causing me to be pointed at with the finger, I despatched hither and thither many letters, lest on any account his Majesty should incur slander and Bohemia disgrace, and, moreover, caused them to be posted up, announcing that I would show myself in the Archbishop's court, in order that

<sup>1</sup> Hus is here strictly within the canon law. See Gratian, II. C. 2, q. 3. This point is emphasised in the conclusion of the Czech *Notice*.

<sup>2</sup> August 26, 1414.

<sup>3</sup> A Czech copy only has been preserved. But a translation into Latin was made as early as the *Epist. Piissimæ*, B. 3.



cognisance might be taken of my beliefs: accordingly, if there had been any one in the kingdom of Bohemia who could charge me with any heresy, he might have announced his name in the Archbishop's court and publicly indicted me there. But inasmuch as no one came forward and my lord the Archbishop gave me and my proctors no *locus standi*, therefore, in the name of justice, I entreat his Majesty, the Queen, their advisers, and the Prefect of the entire court to grant to me due attestation of this fact—namely, that I made the above declaration, and publicly posted up a letter concerning this matter, and that no one in the whole kingdom stood forth against me. Again, besides all this, I hereby make known to the whole of Bohemia, and to the other countries from old time of vast importance, that I wish to appear in Constance at the Council that has been summoned, in the presence of the Pope, if he is to be there, and before the said General Council. If any one can lay any heresy to my charge, let him prepare to set out to the Council, that he may there in person lay before the Pope and the whole Council whatever heresy he hath heard me utter. If I shall be convicted of any heresy, I do not refuse to suffer the penalties of a heretic. But I trust God, whom I truly love, that He will not permit the detractors and adversaries of the truth to overcome the truth.

Hus did not neglect to take other steps for his defence. The same day (August 30), 'in the upper room of the house of the Master of the Mint,<sup>1</sup> John of Jesenicz, the procurator of Hus, humbly but earnestly inquired of Nicholas, Bishop of Nazareth, inquisitor of heresy for the city and diocese of Prague: "Reverend father, do you know of any error or heresy in Master John de

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, p. 211, n. 3.

Husinecz, *alias* Hus?" To which the said Lord Nicholas answered, not of compulsion, but freely and publicly in the Czech tongue: "I have met Master John Hus many times and in many places, eating and drinking with him. I have often been present at his sermons; I have had many talks with him on diverse matters of Holy Scripture. In all his words and deeds I have ever found him to be a true and catholic man, in no wise savouring of heresy or error" (*Doc.* 242).

Certain of the nobles procured a similar declaration from the Archbishop. So, on the following day (September 1), Hus despatched a letter to Sigismund, enclosing copies of the notices he had posted in Prague and elsewhere, and not forgetting, we imagine, though of this the letter says nothing, to forward a copy of the Bishop of Nazareth's certificate of orthodoxy.

### XXXIII. TO SIGISMUND, KING OF THE ROMANS AND OF HUNGARY

(*Prague: September 1, 1414*)

To the most serene prince and lord, Sigismund, King of the Romans and King of Hungary, etc., his gracious lord, humbly praying with heartfelt desire that salvation, peace, and grace may be multiplied to him, and that after the governments of this present life the everlasting life of glory may be granted to him.

Most serene prince and most gracious lord, when I consider with a full heart the gracious and kindly regard which your Majesty most generously cherishes towards a poor subject like myself, I am utterly unable to make reply; but I am constrained to entreat the mercy of the Lord Almighty, Who rewardeth each man worthily, to grant a prosperous reign to your Majesty. Some time ago I forwarded an answer to your Majesty by the hands of Stephen Harnsmeister to the effect that after hearing what Lord Henry told me, and also of your Majesty's promises, I intend

humbly to give in my submission, and under the safe-conduct of your protection<sup>1</sup> to appear at the next Council of Constance, the Lord Most High being my defender. Desiring to attain this object in an orderly fashion, I have caused notices, copies of which I forward, to be posted up all over Prague in Latin and Czech, and to be forwarded through the other cities and announced in sermons.

However, I beseech your Majesty, humbly entreating you in the Lord, by the honour of God and the welfare of His holy Church, by the honour also of the kingdom of Bohemia, of which the King of kings has ordained you the heir, and the welfare and honour of which He, therefore, hath disposed you naturally to desire, that it may please you to extend such kindness to my person that I may come in peace, and be able in the General Council itself to make a public profession of my faith. For as I have taught nothing in secret, but only in public, where masters, graduates, priests, barons, knights, and others most do congregate, so I desire to be heard, not privately, but before a public audience, to be examined, to make my statement, and to reply, with the help of the Lord's spirit, to all who may wish to charge me. And I shall not be afraid, I trust, to confess the Lord Jesus Christ and to suffer death, if needs be, for His true law. For the King of kings and the Lord of lords Himself, very God, though amongst us as a poor man, meek and humble, *suffered for our sakes, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps: he that did no sin, neither*

<sup>1</sup> This gives the value that Hus, rightly or wrongly, attached to the famous safe-conduct. Cf. *infra*, 184, 229, 269. For a critical investigation of the whole subject, see my *Age of Hus*, pp. 282-93.



*was guile found in his mouth,*<sup>1</sup> Who humbling Himself destroyed our death by His own death, and hath constrained us also to suffer with humility and not for naught, seeing that He said: *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*<sup>2</sup>

When I pondered over these things, I, His servant in hope, albeit an unprofitable one, desired to win both clergy and people to the imitation of Himself, for which reason I have incurred the hatred, not of the whole of the people, but only of those who by their lives are enemies of the Lord Himself. It is by them that I have often been cited to appear at the Archbishop's court, but I have always proved my innocence. When at length I was cited to appear at the Curia, I never succeeded through my defenders and proctors in getting a hearing.<sup>3</sup> Therefore I have committed myself into the hands of the most righteous Judge, for Whose glory I trust your clemency will furnish me with a safe, public hearing, the Lord Jesus Christ being my defender. Finally, I have been comforted by the message brought by the noble and strenuous Lord Mikess Diwoke,<sup>4</sup> your Majesty's envoy, that your Highness remembers me so graciously and attentively by your desire to bring my case to an honourable issue, which will also redound to the glory and honour of the King of kings. I write with my own hand on St. Giles's Day.

MASTER JOHN HUS,

Your Majesty's obedient petitioner in the  
name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 60 n.

<sup>4</sup> This is rather contradictory of the statement *infra*, p. 230.

Sigismund was anxious that Hus should journey in his suite. The Reformer would have fared better, as the King pleaded in his own excuse at a later date, if he had accepted the offer. Such, however, was his confidence in his own integrity, his eagerness to confront his enemies, that Hus set off without even waiting for the safe-conduct. As soon as he had received Sigismund's official promise of the safe-conduct—dated Rothenburg, October 8—Hus started (October 11, 1414), leaving the formal document to overtake him as best it might. Hence the allusion in the following letter, written in Czech, to his congregation at the Bethlehem, immediately after his departure from Bohemia.<sup>1</sup> This letter, we may add, fell into the hands of Hus's enemies, and gave him much trouble at Constance, owing, as Hus avers, to the faulty way in which it was mis-translated into Latin. The latter part of the letter is very beautiful. At the same time Hus sent a sealed letter to 'Master Martin, his disciple,' which forms one of the treasures of the collection, invaluable for its insight into the tender, somewhat self-upbraiding, spirit of the writer. This letter (XXXV.) should be compared with similar passages in Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*.

#### XXXIV. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS ON STARTING FOR CONSTANCE

(Without place : near Krakowec ; without date : October 12, 1414)

Master John Hus, in hope a priest and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, to all the faithful and beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus who have heard and received the word of God through me, beseeching for them grace and peace from God our Father and from the Holy Spirit, that they may dwell undefiled in His truth.

Faithful and beloved friends! You know that I faithfully instructed you for a long period, preaching to you the word of God without heresy and without

<sup>1</sup> See p. 159, n. 2. But though not posted until after he left, Hus tells us himself (p. 159, n. 2) that it was written before the arrival of Chlum and Wenzel Doba. For Krakowec, see *infra*, p. 151.

errors, as you are aware: further, I always sought your salvation; I seek it now, and will seek it unto death. I had resolved to preach to you before starting on my journey to Constance, and in particular to declare to you the false testimonies and the false witnesses who gave evidence against me. I possess all their signatures<sup>1</sup> together with their depositions, and I intend to declare their names to you for these reasons—that if I shall be evilly spoken against or condemned to death, you may not be terrified when you know of it, as if I were condemned on account of any heresy that I hold;<sup>2</sup> and also that you may persevere without fear and wavering in the truth which the Lord God hath brought to your knowledge through faithful preachers and through me, feeble though I be; and thirdly, that you may guard against crafty and pretended preachers.

Now, however, I have started on my journey, without safe-conduct,<sup>3</sup> into the midst of many of my greatest *enemies*, among whom the most relentless are *those of my own household*,<sup>4</sup> as you will discover from the depositions and will certainly learn at the close of the Council. I shall be opposed by more foes than our gracious Redeemer—bishops, doctors,

<sup>1</sup> As Lea has shown, *Hist. Inquis.* ii. 477, any knowledge by a prisoner of the Inquisition of the names of the witnesses was a most unusual advantage. But there was no papal Inquisition in Bohemia, only the more *lax episcopal*.

<sup>2</sup> This was much twisted and made into a further charge at Constance. See pp. 173, 180, 207. Hus complained more than once that his enemies treated his Czech writings very unfairly.

<sup>3</sup> For explanation, see *supra*, p. 146. This fixes the date.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 36. These depositions are printed in *Doc.* 174 ff., and bear out Hus's contention. Hus was probably thinking most of all of the deposition of his former friend Andrew Brod.



princes secular, and canons regular. But I put my trust in my gracious, wise, and mighty Saviour that He will give to me, by reason of His own promise and your faithful prayers, the wisdom and constancy of the Holy Spirit; for only so shall I persevere and not be led astray by them to the side of evil, though I suffer at His will temptations, revilings, imprisonment, and death—as indeed He too suffered and hath subjected His own loved servants to the same trials, leaving us an example that we may suffer for His sake and our salvation. For He is God; we are His creatures. He is Lord; we are servants. He is King of the whole world; we are poor weaklings. He is without sin; we are sinners. He needeth nothing; we are needy. If He suffered, being what He is, why should not we? In truth our suffering by His grace is our cleansing from sins and our deliverance from eternal torments. Surely it cannot fall to the lot of His faithful servant that he shall perish, if with His help he shall persevere. Therefore, beloved brothers, pray earnestly that it may please Him to grant me perseverance and to keep me undefiled. And if my death contribute aught to His glory and your advantage, may it please Him to enable me to meet it without sinful fear. But if it shall be more to your advantage, may it please Him to bring me back to you, guiding me to and fro undefiled, that united a while longer we may be taught His gospel and tear asunder some of Antichrist's nets and leave a good example to our brothers to come.

Perhaps you will not see me again at Prague before I die; but if it please Almighty God to bring me back to you, we shall be all the more joyful when

we see each other again, and assuredly so when we meet in the joy of heaven. May it please the merciful God, Who giveth to His own a stainless peace both here and hereafter, *who brought again from the dead the great pastor of the sheep*<sup>1</sup> after He had shed His blood, Who is the eternal witness of our salvation, to fit you in all goodness that you may do His will in harmony, free from all dissension, and that in enjoyment of peace you may by your good deeds attain to the eternal peace through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is God eternal and true man, born of the Virgin Mary. Unto Him there is praise and ever shall be with all the company of the elect, with Whom, if here we shall persevere in the truth, we shall dwell in the joy of heaven. Amen.

### XXXV. TO MASTER MARTIN, HIS DISCIPLE<sup>2</sup>

*(Prague, beginning of October 1414)*

Master Martin, dear brother in Christ, I entreat you in the Lord to fear God and keep His commandments, to flee the society of women and to be careful when hearing women's confessions, that Satan may not deceive you by the hypocrisy of women; for Augustine saith: "Put not your trust in their sanctity: for the more earnest it is, the more wanton it is, and under the guise of piety the marrow of lust is secretly hidden." Therefore beware that you lose not for ever the chastity which I trust you retain. Remember that I taught you from a child to serve Jesus

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> That is, probably, one of the junior members of the University who had attached himself to Hus spiritually. (Cf. pp. 80, 235, 274.)

Christ, and how gladly I would have taught you in one day, if I could, all that I knew. You know, too, that I abhorred the greed and the inordinate lives of the clergy; on which account by God's grace I am suffering the persecution which is soon to do its worst with me; yet I am not afraid of being brought to confusion for the name of Jesus Christ. I beg you also with all my heart not to run after benefices; nevertheless if you should be called to a living, may your motive be the glory of God, the salvation of souls and hard work, *not* the possession of fine clothes and lands.<sup>1</sup> But if you are made a rector, beware of having a young woman as cook and of building your house rather than your soul; see that you are a builder of a spiritual building, and to the poor be gracious and of a humble mind. Don't spend your substance on feasts. I am afraid also if you don't mend your ways by leaving off your fine unnecessary garments, you will receive evil at the Lord's hands; as I, too, shall receive evil, poor wretch! who also wore such things, led astray by the evil habits of the men among whom I suffered hurt to my soul, contrary to God's will, through my proud spirit. But as you have known full well my way of life and my preaching from your youth up, there is no need for me to write more to you on this score. But I beg you, by the mercy of Jesus Christ, not to follow me in any frivolity that you have seen in me. You know that, alas! before I

<sup>1</sup> *Habitio scropharum vel prædiorum*. I take *scropharum* to be a mistake for *schofarum*—*i.e.* (following the changes, usual in Hus, of *f* for *b*) *schubarum*, from *schuba*, a kind of Persian garment, on which see Ducange-Carpentier. Otherwise the word is inexplicable. One MS. reads *ambitio* for *habitio*—"the desire for fine clothes."



became a priest, I was fond of chess and often played it, wasted my time, and through my playing was unfortunate enough to provoke myself and others to anger. For this sin and for the other innumerable sins that I have committed, I commend myself to your prayers for forgiveness to our dear Lord. Do not be slow to ask for His mercy that it may please Him to guide my life, and when I have overcome the evils of this present life, the world, the flesh, and the devil, to give me a place at least on the Judgment Day<sup>1</sup> in the heavenly country.

Farewell in Christ Jesus with all who guard His law.<sup>2</sup> You may keep, if you like, my grey cloak as a memento; but I think you are shy of grey, so give it to any one you prefer to have it. My white gown give to the rector. To my pupil George—I mean Girzik<sup>3</sup>—give a guinea<sup>4</sup> or my grey cloak, because he has been a faithful servant to me.

(The superscription is as follows.)

I beg you not to open this letter, unless you hear for certain that I am dead.

When Hus received Sigismund's call to Constance, he was staying at the castle of Krakowec. This castle, not far from Prague, belonged to a friend of Hus, Henry Lefl of Lazan and

<sup>1</sup> *Saltem in die judicii*—i.e., Hus does not expect to escape in his case the Retardation of the Beatific Vision.

<sup>2</sup> *Legem*. The usual word with Wyclif for what we should now call the gospel. So *passim* in the *Letters* of Hus.

<sup>3</sup> *Vel Girzikoni*. Cf. pp. 206, 236.

<sup>4</sup> *Sexagena*. Three Prague 'sexagenæ' of groats were worth twelve florins. Cf. the oath of the poor students in 1371 in *Mon. Univ. Pragensis*, i. pt. i. p. 47.

Bechyne, whose name we shall meet with more than once in the letters. From this retreat Hus set off on October 11, under the escort of John of Chlum, Wenzel Duba, and Henry Lacembok. With these also rides John Cardinalis of Reinstein. The whole escort consisted of thirty mounted men and two carts, in one of which Hus rode with his books. Among the retinue we may note Peter Mladenowic, the secretary of Chlum, who has preserved for us the letters of these last months, to whom therefore the reader owes much gratitude.

Hus left Bohemia by the valley of the Mies. This was not the usual route over the Böhmerwald, which lay either north or south; but at Neustadt he would regain the more frequented highway. His route thence to Constance can easily be followed on a map. On arriving at Nuremberg Hus wrote the following most interesting letter to his friends at Prague. Hus, we might add, might reasonably expect a warm welcome at Nuremberg, which was at this time one of the head centres of that remarkable band of mystics, the Friends of God.

### XXXVI. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(Nuremberg, October 20, 1414)

Greetings from Christ Jesus! Let me tell you that I never rode in a shortened<sup>1</sup> hood, but undisguised and without anything over my face. As soon as I had crossed the frontier, I reached Baernau<sup>2</sup> first of all, where the rector with his curates was on the look-out for me before I arrived. When I entered the inn-parlour,<sup>3</sup> he at once set before me a big tankard of wine, and in right friendly fashion he with his companions welcomed all my views and remarked that he had always been my friend. Next

<sup>1</sup> *Czotato*. Probably the same as *scotatus* 'incisus, in orbem diminutus.' See illustrations of the word applied to dress in Ducange-Carpentier.

<sup>2</sup> MSS., *Pernow*. "B" with Hus generally in names of places becomes "P." The place must not be confused, as often, with Beraun, near Prague.

<sup>3</sup> *Stubam*. The room of the great stove, so familiar to tourists.

at Neustadt the whole German population had much delight in seeing me. We passed through Weiden<sup>1</sup> with a big crowd agape with admiration. Arrived at Sulzbach, we entered the inn, where a court was sitting (*landrecht*).<sup>2</sup> I said to the sheriffs<sup>3</sup> and magistrates sitting by the stove, "I am Master John Hus, about whom I suppose you have heard much scandal; ask me any questions you like."<sup>4</sup> We had a long conversation and they received everything I said in a good spirit. After this we passed through Hersbruck, and spent the night in the town of Lauf, where the rector, a great canonist, met us with his curates. I had a talk with him and he also took everything in good part. And here we are at Nuremberg! The merchants, who had preceded us, announced our coming. Accordingly the people were standing in the streets looking about and asking, "Which is Master Hus?" Before dinner, the rector of St. Lawrence's, Master John Helwel, sent me a letter saying that he had long wished to have a good talk with me. On the same sheet I wrote back a message to him to come, and he came. I had, moreover, already written out my notice of appeal,<sup>5</sup> wishing to post it up; but in the meanwhile Baron Wenzel sent me word that the burghers and magistrates were assembled at the inn wishing to see me and to have a conference with me. I at once rose from the table and crossed over to where they were. The magistrates gave instructions that our conference should be in private, but I said to them, "I preach in public, and I want every one, who wishes, to hear me." From that moment until dusk we talked

<sup>1</sup> MSS., *Vaydam*.

<sup>2</sup> MSS., *lantricht*—*i.e.*, a provincial court.

<sup>3</sup> *Consulibus*. <sup>4</sup> Cf. Wesley's *Journals*, i. 428. <sup>5</sup> *i.e.*, to Constance.



together in the presence of consuls<sup>1</sup> and burghers. A Carthusian doctor was there who was a famous debater. I noticed that Master Albert, rector of St. Sebald's, was vexed because the burghers took my side. In the end all the magistrates and burghers were convinced. In fact, I have not met a single enemy as yet. In every inn I leave the host as a parting gift a copy of the Ten Commandments,<sup>2</sup> and elsewhere I leave it as a leaven to work in the meal-tub.<sup>3</sup> All the hostesses and their husbands give me a right hearty welcome. Nowhere do they put into force the edict of excommunication, while my notice of appeal, written in German, meets with universal praise. I assure you then that no greater hostility is shown me than by the Bohemian people.<sup>4</sup> And what more can I say? Both Baron Wenzel [*of Duba*] and Baron John [*of Chlum*] treat me very graciously and kindly; they are like heralds of the truth, or rather, to speak more truly, they are advocates of the truth. With them on my side all goes well, the Lord being my defender. The King<sup>5</sup> is down the Rhine<sup>6</sup> and Baron Wenzel

<sup>1</sup> *Consulibus*. The word, whether designedly or not, is very appropriate. Over the gates of Nuremberg was the motto "S.P.Q.N."

<sup>2</sup> *Do decem mandata hospiti*. This may be Hus's tract on the *Ten Commandments*, the date for which, however, is usually given a few weeks later (see *Mon.* i. 296). The subject, at any rate, was clearly a favourite with Hus.

<sup>3</sup> *Applico in farina*. An Italian proverb for a 'willing mind.' Some translators have taken the passage literally, that Hus left his tracts in the flour-bin!

<sup>4</sup> Cf. pp. 147, 165, 263.

<sup>5</sup> Sigismund, as often. See *infra*, p. 163, n. 5.

<sup>6</sup> As a specimen of the faulty readings of the *Epist. Piissimæ* and *Monumenta*, note here: *Rex est in regno, quem sequitur Dominus Wenceslaus, et nos de nocte pergimus Constantiam, ad quam appropinquat Papa Joannes. Judicamus enim quod sequatur Regem forte per 60*

de Leštna<sup>1</sup> is setting out after him. We are going direct<sup>2</sup> to Constance. Pope John is getting near there.<sup>3</sup> For we judge it would be useless to go after the King, perhaps a distance of sixty [*German*] miles, and then return to Constance.

Written at Nuremberg on the Saturday before the Feast of the Eleven Thousand Virgins.<sup>4</sup>

From Nuremberg the direct road to Constance lay through Ulm, Biberach, and Ravensburg to the Lake. One incident of the journey has been preserved for us by Mladenowic. On the occasion of Hus disputing with certain persons in the little Suabian town of Biberach—at that time a free city of the empire,—John of Chlum argued so strenuously ‘with the priests and other men of culture on obedience due to the Pope, excommunication, and other matters, that the rumour spread through the whole town that he was a doctor of theology’; “Doctor Biberach,” as Hus afterwards jestingly calls him in his *Letters* (see p. 159, n. 4).

On reaching the Lake, Hus and his escort would finish the journey by boat. With considerable shrewdness they decided not to take their horses with them to Constance, but to send them back for sale to Ravensburg. On arriving at Constance they discovered the wisdom of the step. The city of the Council, as Ulrich v. Reichental tells us in his famous *Diary*, cannot at this time have had fewer than twenty to thirty thousand horses in it. Reichental’s special duty, in fact, was to provide adequate stabling.

Hus entered Constance on Saturday, November 3, ‘riding through a vast crowd.’ There he lodged with ‘a certain widow Faithful in the street of St. Paul,’ who kept a bakery with the *milliaria et revertatur Constantiam*. Bonnechose translates this nonsense literally.

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, Duba. See pp. 160 and 169, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> MS. and editions read *de nocte*. Read with P., *directe*, and cf. p. 161 *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> Pope John was at this time crossing the Arlberg. Reichental in his *Diary* (ed. Buck, 1882) tells us how he was violently hurled from his sledge into the snow. ‘Here I lie,’ he cried, ‘in the devil’s name. I should have done better to have remained at Bologna.’

<sup>4</sup> See p. 15 for comment on this name.

sign of the White Pigeon close by the Schnetzthor, or road to St. Gallen. From this house—still visible to the tourist—Hus never stirred until his arrest, as we learn on the direct testimony of Chlum.

The 'vast crowd' of which Hus writes was probably not due to curiosity only concerning the Reformer, but, as we learn from the *Journal* of Cardinal Fillastre, to a different cause. 'On Sunday, October 28, the Lord Pope entered Constance in state, and took up his quarters in the Bishop's palace. It was afterwards arranged that the Council should be opened with a procession and high mass on Saturday, November 3'—the very day on which Hus and his friends rode into the city. But on that Saturday, continues Fillastre, 'Pope, cardinals, and all the prelates and clergy were gathered together in the palace, vestments donned, and the procession arranged. This was ready to start—in fact, the Pope had come out of his room—when illness seized him. He was obliged to go back, doff his vestments, and lie down on his bed.' Two days later John had recovered, and opened the Council.<sup>1</sup>

Three letters of Hus written from widow Faithful's have been preserved for us, as well as a letter from John Cardinalis, all of them addressed to the friends in Prague. The gossip they retail on the whole turned out correct. But Benedict never intended to come to the Council, though he sent envoys, accredited to Sigismund, who arrived in Constance on January 8, and caused much stir by their claim to wear red hats. The Dukes of Brabant and Berg had succeeded by their threats in preventing Sigismund's early coronation, and in driving him back in the early autumn from Coblenz to Heidelberg and Nuremberg. Their opposition had now been overcome, and on Sunday, November 4, Sigismund arrived in Aachen, and was crowned on the 8th. He fulfilled Hus's guess by entering Constance at 2 A.M. on Christmas Day.

As regards the number of Parisians at the Council, Hus was mistaken. On December 6 John wrote to expostulate with the French ecclesiastics because they had not yet arrived. In reality, the Paris deputation, with Gerson at the head, did not reach Constance until February 18 or 26—the exact date is somewhat doubtful, probably the latter (Finke, *Forschungen*, 259). The number of cardinals in Constance at this time was but fifteen out of twenty-nine. As John Cardinalis points out (p. 163), the outlook

<sup>1</sup> See Fillastre in Finke, *Forschungen des Kon. Konzils*, p. 163.



at Constance did not at first point to a large attendance. It was not until after the arrival of Sigismund that the princes of Europe sent their embassies.

With the 'seller of indulgences,' Michael Tiem, now Dean of Passau, we have met before (p. 68). The negotiations with John to which Hus and Cardinalis refer were characteristic of the Pope. John was too uncertain of the future to make up his mind, as yet, to a breach with Sigismund, while his future conduct shows that he was not sorry to find a subject which might possibly divert attention from himself, and embroil Sigismund in a conflict with the cardinals. So when, on the Sunday after their arrival, 'Chlum and Lacembok waited on the Pope, informing him that they had brought Hus to Constance under the safe-conduct of Sigismund, and begging that the Pope would not allow violence to be done to him, the Pope replied that even if Hus had killed his own brother he should be safe' (Mladenowic's *Relatio* in *Doc.* 246).

That same night Hus wrote the following letter to his friends in Bohemia :—

### XXXVII. TO THE SAME

(*Constance, November 4, 1414*)

Greetings from Christ Jesus! We reached Constance the Saturday after All Saints' Day, having escaped all hurt. As we passed through the various cities we posted up the notices of appeal in Latin and German. We are lodged in a street near the Pope's quarters.<sup>1</sup> We came without a safe-conduct.<sup>2</sup> The day after our arrival Michael de Causis posted up writs against me in the Cathedral, and affixed his signature to them, with a long preamble to the effect that "the said writs are against that excommunicated and obstinate John Hus, who is also under the suspicion of heresy," and much else besides. Nevertheless, with God's help, I take no notice

<sup>1</sup> The Pope was lodged in the Bishop's palace.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 146, *supra*, for explanation.

of this, knowing that God sent him against me to say evil things of me for my sins, and to test my power and willingness to endure suffering. Barons Lacembok and John Kepka<sup>1</sup> had an audience with the Pope, and spoke with him about me. He replied that he desired no violence to be done. 'Tis reported, though on poor authority, that Benedict, the Pope of the Spaniards, is on his way to the Council. We heard to-day that the Duke of Burgundy,<sup>2</sup> with the Duke of Brabant, had left the field, and that King Sigismund in three days ought to be at Aachen and be crowned, and that the Pope and the Council should be on the lookout for him. But as Aachen is seventy [*German*] miles from here, I imagine that the King will scarcely arrive before Christmas. I think therefore that the Council, if not dissolved, will perhaps end about Easter. The living here is dear, a bed costing half a florin a week. Horses are cheap: one bought in Bohemia for six guineas is given away here for seven florins.<sup>3</sup> Baron Chlum and myself sent our horses to a town called Ravensburg, four [*German*] miles off. I think it will not be long before I shall be hard up for common necessaries. Mention therefore my anxiety on this score among my friends, whom it would take too long to name and it would be irksome to think of separately.

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, Barons Henry and John of Chlum. See p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Dux Burgundiae*. I imagine that this a slip, whether on Hus's part or the copyist's, for 'dux Berg.' See *supra*, p. 156. So far as I know, the Duke of Burgundy had nothing to do with the matter. But Adolph of Berg was up in arms because Sigismund did not support his brother's claim to the vacant archbishopric of Cologne. See Aschbach, *Kaiser Sigismund*, i. 401-9.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, a third the price. For prices at Constance, see Hardt, v. 50-52.

Baron Lacembok is riding off to-day to the King. He has urged me to attempt nothing definite before the arrival of the latter. I am hoping that I shall have a public hearing for my reply. There are many Parisians and Italians here, but few archbishops as yet, and even few bishops. The cardinals are present in great force, riding about on mules, but such sorry scrubs!<sup>1</sup> When I rode into Constance I heard at once of their riding about—I was riding myself through a vast crowd—but I could not see them for the great throng about me. Many of our Bohemian friends spent on the journey all the money they had, and are now in sad straits. I am full of sympathy with them, but cannot afford to give to all. Baron Lacembok took over the horse of Baron Přibislaus; but my horse, Rabstyn, beats them all for hard work and spirit. He is the only one I have by me, if at any time I should have to go out of the city to the King. Greet all my friends without exception, etc. This is the fourth<sup>2</sup> letter written away from home. It is sent off on Sunday night after All Saints' Day in Constance. None of the Bohemian gentry<sup>3</sup> are here except Baron John of Chlum, who escorted me and looks after me like a knight, and everywhere does more preaching than I, in declaring my innocence.<sup>4</sup> Sent off from Constance. Pray God for my constancy<sup>5</sup> in the truth.

<sup>1</sup> Hus falls back on Czech to express his feelings.

<sup>2</sup> That is, counting Letters XXXIV. and XXXV. as sent away after leaving Krakowec. Otherwise we must assume some are lost.

<sup>3</sup> *Militaribus*.

<sup>4</sup> See "Doctor Biberach," pp. 155, 192, 195, 198.

<sup>5</sup> The pun is characteristic and very frequent. Cf. pp. 160, 195, 197.



## XXXVIII. TO THE SAME

(Constance, November 6, 1414)

Greetings from Christ Jesus! Dear friends, I am quite well through it all. I came without the Pope's<sup>1</sup> safe-conduct to Constance; pray God then that He may grant me constancy, because many powerful adversaries have risen up against me, stirred up in particular by that seller of indulgences, the Dean of Passau, now the head of the chapter there,<sup>2</sup> and Michael de Causis, who is always posting up writs against me. But I fear none of these things, nor am I affrighted, for I hope that a great victory is to follow a great fight, and after the victory a greater reward, and the greater confusion of my persecutors. The Pope is unwilling to quash the writs. He said, "What can I do? your side are the aggressors." But two bishops and a doctor had some talk with Baron John Kepka [*Chlum*] to the effect that I should come to terms under a pledge of silence. By which I apprehend that they are afraid of my public reply and sermon,<sup>3</sup> which I hope by the grace of God to deliver when Sigismund comes. Of the latter Baron Wenzel de Leštna<sup>4</sup> has sent news that he expressed

<sup>1</sup> This version differs from that which Hus gives elsewhere, and glosses over the fact that actually Hus had set off without Sigismund's promised safe-conduct. In reality the Pope's safe-conduct could alone have guaranteed his immunity from the Inquisition. Sigismund's safe-conduct did not reach the spiritual sphere. See p. 144 *n.* and p. 146, and cf. p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *Jam præpositus*. See Ducange.

<sup>3</sup> The sermons which Hus expected to give are still preserved for us in *Mon.* i. 44-57. They are chiefly from Wyclif, and in reality cut at the root of the mediæval system.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, Wenzel de Duba, who had ridden from Nuremberg to the King. See p. 155.

pleasure when he (the noble Baron Wenzel) told him that I was riding direct<sup>1</sup> to Constance without safe-conduct. In all the cities we were well treated and had respect paid to us, while we posted up notices in Latin and German in the free cities where I had interviews with the magistrates. I had a herald on the journey in the Bishop of Lebus,<sup>2</sup> who was always one night ahead of us. He spread the news abroad that they were conducting me in a cart in chains, and that people must beware of me, as I could read men's thoughts! So whenever we drew near a city, out came the crowds to meet us, as if to a show! But the enemy was put to confusion by his lie, while the people were glad when they heard the truth. Surely Christ Jesus is with me as a strong warrior; therefore I fear not what the enemy may do. Live holy lives, and pray earnestly that the Lord in His mercy may help me and defend His law in me to the end. Sent off on the evening of St. Leonard's Day.

I imagine I shall be hard up for necessaries, if the Council is prolonged. So ask for an interest in me from those whom you know to be my friends, but in the first instance let the request be conditional. Greet all my friends of either sex, urging them to pray God in my behalf, for there is much need.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 155, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Epis. Lubucensem*, usually, but wrongly translated, "Bishop of Lübeck" (*Lubicensem*). John de Bornsnitz, Bishop of Lebus, was a canon of Prague, a doctor of decrees, and 'auditor Pal. Apostolici.' (See *infra*, p. 162.) He was Bishop from September 24, 1397—1420, when he was translated to Gran. In January 1410 we find him despatched by Alexander V. on special business into Bohemia. He was one of the special inquisitors appointed to examine Hus. See *infra*, p. 174.

In addition to the letters of Hus written at this period, we possess a most valuable letter by John Cardinalis of Reinstein, at one time (e.g. *Mon.*, *Ep. Piiss.*) mistakenly attributed to Hus himself.

John Cardinalis of Reinstein, vicar of Janowicz, Master of Arts and Bachelor of Common Law, had been for many years the trusted diplomatic agent of Wenzel. But he had never concealed his sympathies with the reforming party, and in an anonymous squib written in 1418 he is called 'hæreticus principalis' (*Doc.* 693). His influence was great, as we see from a remark made to him by Palecz a few days later, on the occasion of the arrest of Hus: "Master John, I grieve over you that you have allowed yourself to be seduced; formerly you were a man of weight with the Curia, more noted than all other Bohemians, and now they account you nothing, on account of that sect" (*Doc.* 250). When Christian Prachaticz was arrested (*infra*, p. 196), no attempt was made against Cardinalis. On the death of Hus he returned to Prague and was twice rector of the University, from October 16, 1416—April 23, 1417, and again for the same period in the following year. His name 'Cardinalis' was mistranslated by Luther, and, as we shall see, led the great Reformer astray. See *infra*, p. 237.

#### MASTER JOHN CARDINALIS TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(*Constance, November 10, 1414*)

Dear fellow-suspects<sup>1</sup> and friends! Although we remember that we sent several letters to you, truthfully setting forth the manner of our journey and present lodging in Constance, now, however, to afford you a special proof of our abiding affection for your community, I desire to inform you that yesterday the chamberlain<sup>2</sup> of the sacred apostolic palace, as it is now called, came along with the Bishop of Constance<sup>3</sup> and also the burgo-master of Constance to our lodging and told our master how a fine dispute was going on between the Pope and the cardinals concerning the edict of excommunication, fulminated as it was

<sup>1</sup> *Fautores*, a technical word of the Inquisition.

<sup>2</sup> *Auditor sacri utinam palatii apostolici*. Possibly the Bishop of Lebus. See p. 161, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> The Bishop was Otto de Hachberg-Rötteln, a canon of Cologne. Appointed December 10, 1410, he resigned in 1434. See p. 257.



alleged<sup>1</sup> against our master. They cut the matter short by coming to our master to inform him that the Pope in the plenitude of his power had suspended the aforesaid edict and sentence of excommunication passed on Master John, requesting him none the less, in order to prevent scandal and gossip among the people, not to present himself at any rate at their high masses,<sup>2</sup> though he might freely go about elsewhere, not only in the city of Constance, but in the churches and any place he liked. We learn for a fact that they are all undoubtedly afraid of the sermon which Master John proposes to deliver to the clergy at no distant date.<sup>3</sup> For some person, whether friend or enemy is unknown, announced yesterday in church that Master John Hus would preach next Sunday to the clergy in the cathedral church of Constance, and would give a ducat to every one present! So we can roam as we like in Constance, and our master daily celebrates mass, as he has done hitherto on the whole journey.<sup>4</sup> The master has accepted the King's advice in his own interests and those of the truth not to force any issue until the arrival of the King of Hungary.<sup>5</sup> In fact, nothing so far has been done in the Council; no embassy of any king or prince has arrived; nothing for certain is heard about the movements of Gregory, or Benedict, or their embassies; nor do we expect the Council to begin for several weeks. You should know, and tell the others, that all our party have been cited to appear in person, and that the rest, as is well known, have had open threats against them posted up on the porches and doors of the churches; so let them look out for themselves.<sup>6</sup> Michael de Causis is making a great noise<sup>7</sup> over what he has done. Baron John and Baron Wenzel<sup>8</sup> are warm, zealous supporters and defenders of the truth. Written at Constance the Saturday before Martinmas. The Goose<sup>9</sup> is not yet cooked, and is not afraid of being cooked, because this year the noted eve of St. Martin's falls on a Saturday, when geese are not eaten!<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fulminato prætense*. <sup>2</sup> For explanation see p. 166, n. 1. <sup>3</sup> See p. 160, n. 4.

<sup>4</sup> This, of course, in the case of one excommunicated was open defiance.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 159. The 'King' is Sigismund in both cases. So *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ut sibi videantur*.

<sup>7</sup> Hus falls back on Czech: *ryčně*.

<sup>8</sup> *i.e.*, Chlum and Duba, as usual.

<sup>9</sup> The usual pun for Hus.

<sup>10</sup> P.: *quia presenti anno sabbato ante Martini festum ipsius occurrit celebris vigilia, for which read celebris vigilia ante festum Martini ipsius sabbato occurrit*.

XXXIX. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS<sup>1</sup>

(Constance, November 16, 1414)

To all the faithful and beloved brethren and sisters in God, lovers of the truth of Jesus Christ! Peace be to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, so that ye may be kept free from sins, dwell in His grace, increase in good works and after death enter into eternal joy. Dear friends, I beseech you to live according to God's law and to give heed to your salvation, hearing the word of God with circumspectness, lest ye be deceived by the apostles of Antichrist, who make light of men's sins and afflict no chastisement upon sins, who flatter the priests and do not show the people their sins, who seek their own glory, boasting of their good works and extolling their power, but will not imitate Jesus Christ in His humility, poverty, patience, and tribulation. It was of these that our most gracious Saviour foretold when He said: *False prophets shall rise and shall seduce many.*<sup>2</sup> Again warning His beloved beforehand He saith: *Beware of false prophets who come to you in the clothing of sheep; but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*<sup>3</sup> Surely there is much need that faithful Christians should keep careful watch over themselves; for the Saviour saith that *even the elect (if possible) shall be deceived.*<sup>4</sup> Therefore, dear friends, watch, lest the devil's craftiness deceive you; and be the more cautious, the more Antichrist troubles you. For the day of judgment is approaching, death is laying many low, and the kingdom of

<sup>1</sup> This letter is written in Czech.<sup>2</sup> Matt. vii. 15.<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 11.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiv. 24.

heaven is drawing near to the sons of God. For the sake of obtaining this kingdom, keep your bodies under, lest ye be afraid of death, love one another, and in memory, reason and will abide steadfast in God. Let the terrible day of judgment live before your eyes, that ye sin not; and the eternal joy likewise that ye may seek after it. May the crucified Lord, the beloved Saviour, ever be in your thoughts, that with Him and for His sake we may gladly and patiently suffer all things; for if you will keep His crucifixion in your memory, you will gladly undergo all tribulations, revilings, insults, stripes, fetters, and if His dear will demand it, even death for the sake of His beloved truth.

Ye know, dear friends, that Antichrist hath attacked us with insults, and many so far he hath not hurt one whit, myself for example, although he hath set upon me sorely. Wherefore I entreat you to pray God earnestly that it may please Him to furnish me with wisdom, patience, humility, and energy, in order to stand firm in His truth. He hath brought me now to Constance without let or hindrance; for although I rode the whole way dressed as a priest without disguise, and in all the towns called out my name in a loud voice, I met no open enemy; in fact, I should not have many enemies in Constance if the Bohemian clergy, in their greed for livings and their bondage to avarice, had not been leading people astray on the journey.<sup>1</sup> Yet I trust to the mercy of the Saviour and to your prayers that I shall stand firm in God's truth unto death. Know that the sacrament hath not been interrupted on my account anywhere, not even at Constance, where the Pope

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 161, n. 2.



himself administered it, though I was in the town.<sup>1</sup> I commend you to the gracious Lord God, to the Lord Jesus, very God, the son of the chaste Virgin Mary, Who by His cruel and shameful death redeemed us without any merits of our own from everlasting tortures, from the devil's power and from sin. I write this at Constance, on the feast day of St. Othmar,<sup>2</sup> a strenuous servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed for ever. Amen.

MASTER JOHN HUS.

priest and servant of God, in hope.

The rumour to which John Cardinalis alludes, that Hus intended to preach—which, after the manner of rumours, grew into a report that he had actually preached—was not the only rumour afloat. Another tale, more damaging still, obtained wide circulation. A hay waggon with a large cover had been noticed in his street. In this, it was said, Hus had attempted to escape; he was actually in the cart when his friends Chlum and Lacembok, who were not in the secret, ran and informed the burgomaster and charged Hus with having broken his safe-conduct. The report was undoubtedly false, for Hus, as we know on the evidence of Chlum himself (*Doc.* 292), never left the house until his arrest. Nevertheless, it was widely believed, among others by the gossiping burgher, Ulrich von Reichental, from whose pages it has found its way into history. At any rate it furnished the managers of the Council, ill satisfied with the Pope's vacillation in his negotiations with the heretic, with an excuse for bringing Hus under the grip of the Inquisition. The

<sup>1</sup> In the case of an excommunicated person under an interdict this should have been done until the said person had been surrendered. This was expressly provided in the excommunication of Hus in July 1412. See *Doc.* 462. The usual translation 'when I was present' is ruled out by p. 163 (the request of John himself).

<sup>2</sup> Othmar, appointed by Pepin abbot of St. Gall, in 720, was forced to defend the independence of the monastery against the Bp. of Constance, and died a prisoner on an island near Constance, November 19, 759. Hence the allusion of Hus. For his life, see Pertz, *Mon. Germ.* ii. 40-58.

method they adopted showed either hesitation or duplicity. On November 28, the cardinals, led on by Palecz and Michael the Pleader, sent at breakfast-time the Bishops of Augsburg and Trent, and the burgomaster of Constance, to inform Hus 'that they were now ready to hear him.' Chlum at once detected the plot, for the house was surrounded with soldiers. 'The devil himself,' he said to the burgomaster, 'if he came to plead, ought to have a fair hearing.' 'I have not come,' added Hus, rising from the table, 'to address the cardinals, but the whole Council.' The envoys replied, 'that they had come only for the sake of peace, to avoid a tumult.' After further parley, Hus consented to go with them. 'God bless you,' he said, bidding farewell on the stairs to his weeping hostess. The two bishops for their part could not conceal their joy. 'Now,' they said, 'you will not say mass here any more.' 'So Hus rode away on a small horse to the Pope's palace.' Interrogated by the cardinals, 'Rather than hold any heresy,' he replied, 'I would prefer to die.' 'Your words are good,' replied the cardinals, and retired to dine, leaving Hus to be badgered by a Franciscan friar, who posed 'as a simple monk desirous of information,' but was really, as Hus learned from the soldiers, one 'Master Didaco, reputed the subtlest theologian in all Lombardy.' After dinner, 'at four in the afternoon, the cardinals returned to consider further what they should do with the said Hus. His adversaries Palecz and Michael the Pleader continued instant in their demand that he should not be released. Dancing round the fire, they called out in their joy, "Ha, ha, we have him now. He shall not leave us until he has paid the last farthing."' Chlum, meanwhile, sought out the Pope. John took refuge in characteristic evasions. As for the friar—Didaco—'he is a clown, he is not one of my people.' The imprisonment was the act of the cardinals. 'You know, very well,' he added, 'the terms on which I stand with them.' Had Hus, he continued, really a safe-conduct? 'Holy Father,' replied Chlum, 'you know that he has' (Mladenowic's *Relatio* in *Doc.* 248-52).

The fate of Hus was really sealed. That night 'about nine he was led away to the house of one of the precentors of the cathedral.' Eight days later (December 6) he was removed 'to a dark cell hard by the latrines,' in the monastery of the Black-friars, in those days on an island in the lake, though now joined to the town. In later prints we can still see it strongly surrounded with its own walls. (See map in Hardt, *v.* iv.)

For several days carpenters had been hard at work in the monastery preparing the prison for his reception, fitting in bolts, locks, and irons, making up six beds for his gaolers, and fixing up a stove for their comfort. But the comfort of Hus was the last thing considered, and the pestilential latrines brought on a grievous sickness so severe that his friends 'despaired of his life. But the Pope sent his own physician, who administered to him clysters.' The death of the prisoner before his condemnation would not have suited the purposes of the Council.

Chlum, in spite of his rebuff by the Pope, was not inactive. He reported the matter to Sigismund, and 'showed and read aloud the said safe-conduct to the notables of Constance.' On December 24, knowing that Sigismund would shortly arrive, he posted up a notice on the doors of the Cathedral, 'complaining that the Pope had not kept faith with him'; the insult to the safe-conduct was a step upon which they would not have ventured 'if Sigismund had been present.' Honest Chlum was mistaken. Whatever Sigismund's previous intentions, when he arrived he blustered a little, but did nothing except procure for Hus a better lodging in the refectory. Sigismund probably realised his own powerlessness; for, on January 1, a deputation from the Council warned him that he must not interfere with the liberty of the Council in the investigation of heresy. If he did it would be at the peril of the break-up of the Council. So Sigismund capitulated, assuring the deputation 'that the matter of Hus and other details of small consequence must not be allowed to interfere with the reformation of the Church.'<sup>1</sup>

Hus meanwhile lay grievously ill in his cell. From November 16, 1414, to January 19, 1415, his letters ceased, at any rate none have been preserved for us. The following letter from Chlum is the only one that we know of that reached him in this interval from the outer world. The letter is without date, but from internal evidence must have been written before Hus's removal from the fever-trap. The date on which Hus was removed to the refectory is a little uncertain—either January 3 (following Hardt) or January 8. If we take the 3rd as the correct date, for the dates of sick men in prison are not altogether trustworthy,

<sup>1</sup> Finke, *Forschungen und Quellen zur Gesch. des Konstanzer Konzils*, pp. 253-4.



this letter of Chlum was despatched on the evening of January 1, after Sigismund's capitulation to the deputation and refusal to liberate Hus from prison. To this the letter makes reference at the close.

JOHN OF CHLUM TO MASTER JOHN HUS

(Without date : January 1, 1415 ?)

My beloved friend in Christ, you ought to know that Sigismund was present to-day with the deputies of all the nations of the whole Council, and spoke about your case, and, in particular, pleaded for a public hearing.<sup>1</sup> In reply to his words, it was unanimously and finally decided that, whatever happens, you shall have a public hearing. Your friends will insist on this. They are also insisting that at any rate you be placed in a well-ventilated place, so that you may recover yourself and get fresh strength.

Therefore, for God's sake and your own salvation and the furtherance of the truth, don't yield a point through any fear of losing this miserable life, because it is surely for your great good that God has visited you with this His visitation. The Prague friends are very well, in particular Baron Skopek,<sup>2</sup> who is greatly rejoiced that you have got what you have so long prayed for, persecution in behalf of the truth.

We urge you strongly to set down on this sheet of paper, if you think well, your grounds and final intentions respecting the communion of the cup, so that it can be shown at the proper time to your friends ; for there is still a kind of split among the

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 168. But the date of this letter is very doubtful.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, Henry de Duba. The line of Duba was divided into two main divisions, the first of which was again subdivided into the family of Berka and the family of Skopek. Wenzel de Duba of Leštna belonged to the second main division (Benesovien). Henry's castle was at Auscha. Henry, whose health at Constance gave Hus some concern (p. 176), died in 1417 without children, and was succeeded by his elder brother, Aleš of Drazic, who had been from 1404 the chamberlain of Bohemia, and was a great enemy of the Hussites. To Henry Skopek (Skopkon) de Duba, as one of the chief patrons of Hus, we find frequent reference in the *Letters (infra)*, pp. 227, 229, 234).

brethren, and many are troubled about this matter, and appeal to you and your judgment in reference to certain writings.<sup>1</sup>

Your principal friends<sup>2</sup> are grieved over the reply given about the prison,<sup>3</sup> and especially Jesenicz. However, the past is beyond recall. They are loud in their praises of your constancy.

<sup>1</sup> See for this matter p. 177, *infra*. The 'writings' are those of Jakoubek of Mies. It is curious that Chlum says nothing of the little tract of Hus, *De Sanguine Christi sub specie vini* (see *Mon.* i. 42-44). According to the inscription, this was written before Hus was cast into prison, and in it Hus had already summed up on the side of the Utraquists. It is possible the inscription is a mistake, and this is really the tract 'set down on this sheet of paper.' But see pp. 177 and 185.

<sup>2</sup> P.: *amici præcipui*. Perhaps we should read *præcipue tristantur*, 'are especially grieved.'

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, Sigismund's refusal to release, or if the letter be assigned to a different date, to difficulties experienced in obtaining the transfer of Hus to the refectory.

## Part V.—Letters Written during the Imprisonment at the Blackfriars

(November 16, 1414—March 24, 1415)

IN January, on his partial recovery from his first illness, Hus once more began his interrupted letters. They were passed out, in spite of the vigilance of Michael's spies, by means of his Polish visitors, and by the connivance of his gaoler Robert, whom he had made his devoted servant—'the faithful friend,' 'that good man,' to whom Hus cautiously alludes in his *Letters*—for whose benefit he penned in prison several short tracts, still preserved for us in the *Monumenta*—*The Lord's Prayer*, *The Ten Commandments*, *On Marriage*—'which estate, please God, Robert is shortly about to enter'—and *On Mortal Sin*. A larger tract, compiled also at his gaoler's request, was his *Lord's Supper*,<sup>1</sup> written for edification rather than controversy. 'I beg of you,' he writes, 'not to trip me up if my quotations from the doctors are not exact, for I have no books, writing in prison.' All his books, in fact, including his Vulgate and Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, had been taken away from him. Hence the request in Letter XLI. But the absence of second-hand unacknowledged quotations is not altogether to the disadvantage of Hus's prison tracts. They are pleasant reading, with little distinctive save their tenderness. Others than Robert the gaoler had been won over by the charm of their prisoner. Even the officials of the Pope seem to have been betrayed into kindness (*infra*, p. 176).

To these works we shall find frequent reference in the letters that follow. Unfortunately, save for No. XLIV., no manuscript of these letters now exists; we are entirely dependent on the early printed editions, especially the *Epistolæ Piissimæ*. The preservation of the originals would have been almost impossible. The circumstances under which they were written would be against their

<sup>1</sup> For these works, see *Mon.* i. 29-44.



life. 'Alas, alas!' cried Hawlik, the priest of the Bethlehem, as he read the following letter to the congregation, and pointed to the torn scrap on which it was written—'alas, alas! Hus is running out of paper' (*Doc.* 255). Chlum also (p. 196) speaks of one of Hus's letters as written on a 'tattered three-cornered bit of paper.' We understand this when we remember that Hus sometimes spent whole nights in writing letters or scribbling hexameters 'to pass the time,' to say nothing of formal answers to his enemies (*infra*, p. 206).

These prison letters are generally undated, and contain few indications of time. The student will understand that the order in which they are arranged is therefore to a large extent conjecture, and indicates merely whether in our opinion the letters come early or late in this first imprisonment. With one or two exceptions, we have seen little reason to question in this matter the judgment of Palacký. That Letters XLII.-V. were written in February 1415 is clear from a statement of Fillastré in his *Diary*, that that month was filled up with Inquisition matters, only to be broken off towards the close by the issue of the abdication of John (see Fillastré in Finke, *op. cit.* 166). Of the value of the letters themselves we need say little. They will appeal to every reader by their tenderness and true piety.

## XL. TO THE PEOPLE OF PRAGUE<sup>1</sup>

(*Blackfriars, January 19, 1415*)

May it please God to be with you, that ye may persevere in resisting wickedness, the devil, the world, and the flesh.

Dear friends, I beseech you, as I sit here in my prison, of which I am not ashamed, seeing that I suffer in hope for God's sake, Who visited me in His mercy even with a sore sickness, and hath brought me back again to health, and suffered those to be my most persistent foes whom I had treated with much kindness, and had sincerely loved.

<sup>1</sup> Written in Czech.

I beseech you, I say, to pray God for me that it may please Him to be with me. For in Him alone I have hope, and in the prayers you offer to Him, that He will cause me to be faithful in His grace even unto death. If at this time it shall please Him to take me to Himself, His holy will be done; or if He shall deign to restore me alive to you, His will likewise be done. I am now assuredly in need of your best help; yet I know that God will send no calamity or trial upon me but what will turn out for your good and mine, so that, in being exercised thereby and abiding steadfast, we may win a great reward.

Let me inform you that my enemies have given an utterly false translation in Latin of those letters which I had left for you on starting on my journey.<sup>1</sup> They are writing so many articles against me that my time in prison is fully occupied in replying to them. I have no counsellor by me but the merciful Lord Jesus, Who said to His faithful friends: *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist.*<sup>2</sup> Oh, dear friends, remember that I laboured with you in all zeal, and ever long for your salvation, even now when I am in prison and in the midst of great trial. Sent off at Constance on Saturday, the vigil of St. Fabian.

#### XLI. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(*Blackfriars, without date: January 1415*)

Gracious lord, please get me a Bible, and send it by that trusty man of yours. If your secretary Peter<sup>3</sup> hath any ink, I should like to have it, with some pens and a small inkhorn.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxi. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Mladenovic,

I know nothing either of my Polish servant or of Cardinalis, except that I have news that your lordship is here and in the King's company. I beg you therefore to entreat his Majesty, both on my own account and for the sake of God Almighty, Who hath so richly endowed him with His gifts; and, further, for the sake of manifesting justice and truth to the glory of God and the welfare of His Church. Entreat him, I say, to release me from imprisonment, so that I may be able to prepare myself for a public hearing. You should know that I have been very ill, and have had clysters applied to me; but I am now well again. Please give my greetings to the Bohemian lords who are at the court of the king. Written with my own hand, which your secretary, Peter, knows.<sup>1</sup> Sent off from prison. May all of you who are my friends remember the Goose!

The Commission to which Hus alludes in the following letter was a Commission of three inquisitors—the Patriarch of Constantinople, Hus's courier the Bishop of Lebus, and Bishop Bernard of Citta di Castello, who had met Jerome at Cracow in the spring of 1413, and procured, as we have seen (p. 134), his expulsion from that city. These the Council had appointed, immediately on Hus's arrest, to examine him. By these three, 'together with their notaries and witnesses,' Hus was repeatedly visited in prison and questioned. The prosecutors, especially, Palecz and Michael, were unsparing in their labours. 'I should be glad,' said Michael, spurring on a reluctant witness, 'to bear evidence against my own father if he were a heretic.' Michael's spies, as Hus complains, were everywhere 'finding out letters and other evidence.' To what Hus alludes in his statement about the 'dozen masters' it is difficult to say. Wylie<sup>2</sup> and others have taken Hus to mean that the inquisitors offered him a dozen

<sup>1</sup> Hus evidently feared forgeries in his name stating that he had recanted, etc.; for a recantation would have suited the Council better than his burning. Cf. p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Council of Constance*, p. 148.



## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 175

masters to plead his case. But the defence of a prisoner was a thing absolutely forbidden, as Lea<sup>1</sup> has shown, and would never have been allowed. In fact, as Hus tells us (p. 179), a proctor was expressly refused. We incline to think that there is here some confusion in allusion to the Commission of twelve, that according to Cerretanus (reported in Hardt, iv. 23) was appointed to try Hus on December 1. At the head of this Commission were Cardinals D'Ailli, Zabarella, and Fillastre. With them were associated 'six other learned men.' This Commission seems to have delegated the actual work to the Commission of three, who, if my interpretation be correct, spent much time in pleading with Hus to waive his claim to a hearing before the whole Council, and recognise the jurisdiction of the twelve. If so the word 'masters' is used contemptuously. In support of this the reader will note the last clauses of the second paragraph.

### XLII. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

*(Blackfriars, without date : February 1415)*

Noble and gracious lord, I am greatly comforted. I beg you for God's sake not to be weary of your long-continued and great efforts on my account: for the God of truth and the Lord of justice is standing by you to give you your reward.

These commissioners urged me persistently for several days to hand over my case to twelve or thirteen masters! I refused to submit myself to them. But after I had written with my own hand replies in reference to the forty-five articles of Wyclif, and to the others which are charged against me, I at once wrote out in the presence of the notaries and commissioners a protest expressing my desire to appear before the whole Council and give an account of the beliefs I hold.

The articles which they have extracted from my

<sup>1</sup> Lea, *Hist. Inquis. in Middle Ages*, i. c. xi.

book *De Ecclesia* by false omissions and additions shall be brought to light by God's grace, and also the reply which I wrote in prison, though I had not a single book to help me.<sup>1</sup>

A harder comforter in time of sickness I have never found in my life than Palecz!

All the clerks of the Pope's household<sup>2</sup> and all my goalers treat me with much kindness. The Lord delivered Jonah from the whale's belly, David from the lions' den, the three children from the fiery furnace, Susannah from the accusation of false witnesses:<sup>3</sup> and He can deliver me, if expedient, for the glory of His name and for the preaching of His word. But if a death precious in the Lord's sight shall fall to me, the Lord's name be blessed. If I could only see the King once more along with our Bohemian friends, I should be comforted.

I have been much rejoiced at the news.<sup>4</sup> Surely the Lord hath comforted me. I was glad to hear of Henry Skopek's health.<sup>5</sup> It is good of you to send me a Bible.<sup>6</sup> Don't be distressed about me. For what profit hath it? Written in prison at midnight. Please reward that faithful friend of mine to whom I am specially indebted.<sup>7</sup>

The letters written to Jakoubek to which Hus refers in the following letter are lost. Jakoubek (Jacobellus or Little

<sup>1</sup> This answer to Hus is preserved for us in *Doc.* 204-24. It is remarkable for its full quotations of Scripture. Its other quotations are familiar to us already in the *De Ecclesia* itself, and prove that Hus had a good verbal memory of his own work. Probably Hus did not reckon his 'Bible' (see below) as 'a book.'

<sup>2</sup> *Cameræ.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly the news of the growing dissensions between John and the Council.

<sup>5</sup> P. 169, n. 2.

<sup>6</sup> See n. 1 above.

<sup>7</sup> Gaoler Robert.

## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 177

James, so called from his stature), whose fuller name was Jakoubek ze Stribra of Mies, had taken his B.A. at Prague in 1393, his M.A. in 1397. He was therefore older than Hus, and from the first had been one of the leading spirits among the Reformers. He had succeeded Michael the Pleader as vicar of St. Adalbert's. He had now become the leader of the Utraquists in the question of the cup. Two Waldensians from Dresden, Peter and Nicholas, 'who were given to asking curious questions,' had raised the matter, and on being expelled from the diocese had come to Prague. Here they had persuaded Jakoubek, in the summer of 1414, to return to the primitive custom of the Church. So at four churches in Prague, St. Michael's, St. Nicholas's, St. Adalbert's, and St. Martin's, the laymen once more partook of the communion under both species. But at the Bethlehem, under priest Hawlik, there seems to have been a protest against the innovation (p. 248, *infra*). As we have seen already (p. 169), this led to a division among the Reformers, and Chlum invoked the authority of Hus. Hitherto, Hus had taken little interest in the matter—in fact, in his *De Coena Domini*, written at a later date, he still practically concedes the Roman position.<sup>1</sup> But his views were already undergoing a rapid change, and he soon committed himself decisively to the opinions of Jakoubek (*infra*, 245, 248). The lengthy discussions of the matter between Jakoubek and Andrew Brod have been preserved for us in Hardt (iii. 335-933), and prove Jakoubek to have been an acute and well-read debater.

### XLIII. TO PETER MLADENOWIC

(Without date: February 1415)

I have not as yet written a letter with news of my imprisonment, except the one in which I asked the Bohemians for their prayers<sup>2</sup>—if indeed you sent it on. Perhaps you know about the letter<sup>3</sup> which I wrote to Master Jakoubek, in which these words occurred, "My enemies have stated that no hearing<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Mon.* i. 40*d.*, last par.

<sup>2</sup> *Viz.*, Letter XL. dated January 19.

<sup>3</sup> This Letter is lost.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, public hearing before the Council.



shall be granted to me, unless I first pay 2,000 ducats by way of indemnity to the ministers of Antichrist.”<sup>1</sup> Michael hath got hold of a copy of this as well as the lengthy and methinks outspoken reply of Master Jakoubek. Michael came with the Patriarch,<sup>2</sup> notaries and witnesses, when Master Nicholas of Stojčen<sup>3</sup> was present and stood opposite me. One of the commissioners, giving me a copy of my letter to read, asked me on oath whether it was mine. I answered, “Yes.” I fancy I was not so much upset—except indeed for the greeting of Master Palecz—as on account of the above letters, being vexed with the wickedness of Michael and his spies, and with Master Jakoubek, who is given to preaching that people should beware of hypocrites, and is the only one to be especially taken in by hypocrites and to put his trust in hypocrites! I imagine he wrote a bitter letter, which I did not read. For both letters were in one envelope, and I hastily concluded that the reply to my letter was not there, but a copy of a letter from the rector of Janowicz to me.<sup>4</sup>

The following letters of Hus are of great value and interest. They bring out very clearly the difficulties of Hus in prison, prostrate by sickness, and daily badgered by the inquisitors and his enemies. They also show us the optimism of Hus as

<sup>1</sup> There was no papal inquisition in Bohemia. Hence Hus was not aware of its procedure. By a decretal of Innocent III. the property of all suspects became forfeited *ipso facto*, a decretal expressly based on the Roman law of *Majestas*. (See Lea, *Hist. Inquis.* i. 502, and cf. *infra*, p. 186.)

<sup>2</sup> Of Constantinople, one of the inquisitors (see p. 174).

<sup>3</sup> He incepted as M.A. in 1410, and lectured at Prague until 1445. From the first he had joined the Wyclifists, and according to the famous English Hussite, Peter Payne, was one of Hus's proctors at Rome in 1411-12 (*supra*, pp. 45 and 60, n. 2, and *Doc.* 87 n.)

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, John Cardinalis.

## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 179

to the justice of his cause, his blindness to his real position, and the somewhat crude plans by which he hoped to escape from the toils of the Inquisition.

### XLIV. To JOHN OF CHLUM

(Undated: February 1415)

If my letter hath not been sent to Bohemia, please keep it and don't send it on, because it may get into wrong hands.

Item, should the King inquire who ought to be my judge, point out that the Council neither sent me an invitation nor cited me to appear, nor have I ever been charged before the Council; and yet the Council hath put me in prison and appointed its own proctor against me.

Item, noble and gracious John, if an audience shall be granted to me, I ask that the King be present and that a place be assigned to me near him, so that he can hear and understand me properly. And you, too, must be present and Baron Henry [*Lacembok*] and Baron Wenzel [*de Duba*] and others, at any rate if possible, and hear what the Lord Jesus Christ, my proctor and defender and most gracious judge, will put into my mouth, so that whether I die or live you can be true and fitting witnesses, if liars should ever say that I departed from the truth which I preached.<sup>1</sup>

Item, you should know that in the presence of witnesses and notaries in the prison I asked the commissioners to appoint me a proctor and advocate. They agreed to do so, but afterwards refused my request.<sup>2</sup> I have handed over my case to the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 147,

<sup>2</sup> See remarks on p. 175.

Jesus Christ that He Himself may be proctor, advocate, and judge.

Item, you should know that they have no count, as I imagine, against me, except that I hindered the bull proclaiming the crusade.<sup>1</sup> Yet they have my pamphlet which was read before me, and I duly certified it.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, they charge me with having been so long under sentence of excommunication and with having administered the sacrament during the time, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Thirdly, that I appealed from the Pope.<sup>4</sup> For they read my appeal in my presence; and I admitted it was mine before them all with a joyous heart and a smile.

Fourthly, that I left behind me a letter, which was read in the Bethlehem, and which my enemies utterly mistranslated and misinterpreted,<sup>5</sup> containing the statement that I was leaving without a safe-conduct.

In answer to this last, assert that when I left I had not a safe-conduct *from the Pope*;<sup>6</sup> and secondly, that I was not aware that you were commissioned<sup>7</sup> to go with me, when I wrote that letter.

Item, ask if I could enter a protest on the question which I wish to make the main issue.<sup>8</sup> Moreover,

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, pp. 67-9.

<sup>2</sup> Probably his *Disputation against Indulgences* delivered (June 7, 1412) before the University (see *Mon.* i. 173-89 and *supra*, p. 69).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> *Doc.* 464-6; end of 1412. See p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> See *supra*, p. 147.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 160, n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> By Sigismund.

<sup>8</sup> *Determinare*, a University term which must not here be taken too literally, though compare *infra*, p. 184. Hus had already prepared before he left Prague three sermons, which he desired to deliver before the Council (*Mon.* i. 44-57). The first and most important, *On the Sufficiency of the Law of Christ for the Government of the Church*, a familiar theme with Wyclif, really cut at the very roots of the mediæval system. To this Hus here alludes as the 'determination' he desired to present (cf. pp. 160 and 184). Hus made a great mistake in not recognising from the first that the Council was not a University Debating Society,



## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 181

your secretary Peter can arrange the petition for a hearing.

Item, if a hearing shall be granted to me, ask that after it is granted the King shall not allow me to be thrust back into prison; so that I can be free to avail myself of your counsels and those of my friends, and, if it should please God, to say something to my lord the King for his own good and that of Christianity.

### XLV. TO THE SAME

(Without date: February, 1415)

I spent nearly all last night in writing answers to the charges which Palecz had drawn up against me.<sup>1</sup> He is definitely working to bring about my condemnation. God have mercy on him and comfort my soul!

They are saying that the article "on the right to disendow"<sup>2</sup> is heretical. You may give my lord the King the hint that if that article be condemned as heresy, he too will come to be condemned as a heretic for having taken away from the bishops their temporal goods, ay, as his father did before him,<sup>3</sup> Emperor and King of Bohemia. Give no person letters to

<sup>1</sup> See *Doc.* 204 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Gerson, in his charges against Hus, forwarded from Paris on September 24, 1414, had put his finger on this (*Doc.* 187), while it had already in 1412 formed one of the charges of Michael the Pleader (*Doc.* 170). Hus, in fact, had embraced Wyclif's "plan of campaign" to this extent, that the goods of priests of evil life should be taken away for the benefit of the poor. Hus's treatise on this subject, *De Ablatione* (see *Mon.* i. 117-25), is mainly taken from the *De Ecclesia* of Wyclif. It was written in 1412.

<sup>3</sup> Charles IV. In his *De Ablatione* Hus simply refers in general terms (from Wyclif) to the case of the Templars. Both Charles and Wenzel had few qualms in this matter.

carry except one whom you can trust like your very self, and who can hold his tongue on his errand.

Item, tell Doctor Jesenicz and Master Jerome, and indeed all our friends, that they must not come here on any account.<sup>1</sup>

I am surprised that my lord the King hath forgotten me, and that he never sends a word to me. Perhaps I shall be sentenced before I have speech with him. If this is his honour, it is his own look-out.

Noble and gracious Lord John, my kind benefactor and brave defender, don't trouble yourself on my account and about the losses you sustain. God Almighty will give the more hereafter. Please give my greetings to the Bohemian lords. I have no news about any of them, except that I fancy Lord Wenzel de Duba is here and Lord Henry Lacembok, who remarked: "My dear fellow, don't pry into details!"<sup>2</sup>

Let me know if you have any one you are willing to depend on. John Barbatus,<sup>3</sup> pray for me, dear friend, and let the others pray as well. Try to get the King to ask for my replies, which are signed with my own hand, both as regards the [*forty-five*] articles against Wyclif and the [*forty-two*] against myself.<sup>4</sup>

These replies may be copied out, but are not to be shown to any outsider; and let the copy be written in such a way as to distinguish the several charges easily. I do not know whether my petition will be considered, which I gave to the Patriarch<sup>5</sup> to present to the Council. I fancy he will not present it. Please God, the King will quash the indictment of the Prague

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, p. 183, last paragraph, and cf. pp. 196, *n.* 1, 209, and 219, *n.* 1.

<sup>2</sup> This last sentence is in Czech. To what it alludes I know not.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> See *Doc.* 328, 204.

<sup>5</sup> P. 175.

doctors as regards one or two of my articles, that concerning the "Right to Disendow," that concerning the "Donation of Constantine," and that entitled "Tithes are Pure Alms"<sup>1</sup>—all of which I refused to disown—I mean if the King were prompted in some way. But this should be done by some one not belonging to our party.

If I were only free I should say to him privately, "Your Majesty, see to it that there is no secret transference of the power you love, so that you may never see it again."

Tell John Cardinalis to be careful; for all the men who affected to be friendly were really spies. I found this out from the lips of my examiners, who remarked: "John Cardinalis himself confounds the Pope with the cardinals, asserting that they are all guilty of simony together."<sup>2</sup> Let Master Cardinalis stay in the King's court as much as he can, or they will arrest him, as they have done me. No one doth me greater harm than Palecz. God Almighty have mercy on him! He is the ringleader, *následník*, (the arch-detective). He insisted that all my adherents should be summoned and should abjure their views. He said in the prison that all who attend my preaching maintain that after consecration the material substance of the bread remains.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *De Ablatione, De Constantini dotatione, De Eleemosynis* (see p. 70, *supra*). All the three are mentioned in Gerson's articles against Hus (*Doc.* 186-7). The treatises are in *Mon.* i. 111-34. Hus had learned their doctrines from Wyclif. Hus seems to have got his way to this extent, that at the formal examination of June 8 nothing was said on these matters, at any rate Mladenowic in his *Relatio* reports nothing.

<sup>2</sup> A side-light on the already existing breach between the two (see Hardt, *Constanc. Concil.* iv. 41, for date), that culminated in John's flight.

<sup>3</sup> One of the doctrines that Hus did not believe, in this, for once, not following the lead of Wyclif. The tenses "attend," "maintain," are probably due to haste, and should be pasts.



I am surprised that no Bohemian visits me in prison. Perhaps they are acting for the best. Let this letter be torn up at once.

Send another shirt by the bearer. My Lord John, insist with the Bohemians that the citation against certain parties already issued be annulled; and that the King have compassion on his inheritance and not let it be harassed gratuitously because of one disaffected person.

I should like to speak to the King at least once before I am condemned; for I came here at his own request and under his promise that I should return in safety to Bohemia.<sup>1</sup>

#### XLVI. TO HIS FRIENDS AT CONSTANCE

(Without date: end of February 1415)

So far as revising my defence is concerned, I do not see how I can do it in any way or arrange otherwise, as I have no idea on what issue a hearing will be given to me. I put in a strong protest<sup>2</sup> in the presence of the notaries and I wrote an appeal to the whole Council which I gave to the Patriarch, entreating to be allowed to reply to each article, as I had already done in private. I wrote this with my own hand. I asked as an alternative that if a hearing should be granted me, I might reply as we do in the schools.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, perhaps God will give me the hearing that I may deliver my sermon.<sup>4</sup>

I trust by God's grace I shall never swerve from

<sup>1</sup> Hus's view of the meaning of the safe-conduct is clear, however mistaken (see p. 144 and especially p. 230).

<sup>2</sup> See p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *determinare*, p. 180, n. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*

the truth as I understand it. Pray God to preserve me.

As to the sacrament of the cup, you have the statement I wrote out in Constance<sup>1</sup> giving reasons. I do not think I can add anything, except that the gospel and Paul's epistle give plain evidence in my favour. It was the custom also in the early Church. If possible, arrange that at least permission be given by bull for the cup to be granted to those who demand it from feelings of devotion, the circumstances being taken into account.<sup>2</sup>

My friends ought not to trouble themselves over the private inquisition into my beliefs. I do not see how it could have been avoided, because it had been settled by the Council before my arrest. Moreover, a bull was published by the commissioners and read in my presence in which I am called "a heresiarch and a deceiver of the people." But I hope that what I have spoken in secret *shall be proclaimed on the housetops*.<sup>3</sup>

The day before yesterday—it was the day on which I saw my brother John Barbatus<sup>4</sup>—I was again cross-examined with regard to the forty-five articles. By way of reply I repeated the declaration I gave before. They put the question to me about each article separately, whether I desired to defend it. I replied that I would accept the decision of the Council as I had before declared. To each of the articles I said, as I had previously done with regard to some of them, "This is true, if you take it in

<sup>1</sup> See p. 170, *n.*

<sup>2</sup> This was the settlement grudgingly obtained at the Council of Basel by the *Compactata*, the Magna Charta of the Calixtine Church.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 45 and 182.

this sense." Whereupon they remarked, "Do you wish to defend it?" My reply was, "No, I abide by the decision of the Council."

God is my witness that I could not think at the time of a more suitable reply, seeing that I had before written with my own hand that I had no wish to make an obstinate defence of anything but was ready to receive instruction from any one. That question was put to me, because some one had told them that I had given a message to the King to the effect that I wanted to defend three or four of the articles. They inquired therefore if I had given any message to him. I said, "No": for I never sent any message in these terms to the King, but as you know, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Item, Michael was standing by holding up the paper and urging the Patriarch to make me reply to their questions. Meanwhile some bishops came in. Once more Michael brewed some fresh mischief. God permitted him and Palecz to rise up together against me on account of my sins: for Michael pries into my letters and other things, while Palecz brings out those old conversations we had together years ago.

The Patriarch is always insisting before them all that I have plenty of money.<sup>2</sup> So an archbishop said to me in the course of the inquiry, "You have 70,000 florins." Michael exclaimed before them all with a mocking laugh, "What has become of that doublet<sup>3</sup> full of florins? How much money do the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 183, first paragraph.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 178, first paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> *Joppa*. Ducange says *joppa* = 'caligæ species, Hungaris,' and adds: 'I do not know whether the same as *jupa* = Fr. *jupe*.' Carpentier gives other illustrations.



barons in Bohemia hold in trust for you?" Without doubt I was sorely harassed that day.

A bishop said, "You have set up a new law." Another remarked, "You have preached all those articles." I made a right stern reply, God helping me, saying, "Why do you wrong me in this way?"

You write not a word about those who have been cited. How is it that no proctor hath been sent to represent them either by the King<sup>1</sup> or the Prague citizens or by those that have been cited?<sup>2</sup>

The following letter is dated by Palacký as March 4, 1415, reckoning eight weeks from Hus's removal to the refectory (see *infra*, p. 189), which he dates on January 8. As I have dated this on January 3, following Hardt, iv. 26-32 (see p. 168), the date will be rather February 28. Additional confirmation of this view will be found in the fact that we have other letters to Chlum, dated, it would appear, on March 4 (see p. 191).

#### XLVII. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(Without date : February 28 (?), 1415)

Gracious lord, I am very glad to hear of your good health and your continued loyal and kindly constancy in all the efforts you are making for your poor friend. God hath endowed you with constancy above all other men and given you to me as a helper, for your good, I trust, both in this present life and in eternity. I beg you then, by God's mercy, to await the issue of my case, like a soldier of Jesus Christ. If Master (*dominus*) John of Janowicz [*Cardinalis*] is quite well—he spent much time with me—I beg you to confer with him.

I feel my debt to the noble Baron Wenzel de Duba.

<sup>1</sup> Wenzel, not Sigismund.    <sup>2</sup> *Infra*, p. 196, n. 1.

Please greet him by my prayers, which are set loose by my prison, and give him my thanks for his faithful interest in my cause. Greet the rest of the faithful Bohemians.

I blame myself for not keeping back my tears on suddenly seeing Master Christian; but the sight of my faithful master and particular benefactor made them stream from my eyes.

I had heard that, with your whole family, you had gone away for a long visit,<sup>1</sup> but now my soul is comforted. God, most gracious, at one time consoles me and at another afflicts me; but I trust He is ever with me in tribulation. For I have again been horribly racked with stone, from which I never suffered before, and with severe vomiting and fevers. My gaolers were afraid I should die, and removed me from the dungeon. Many articles from the Bag of Lies,<sup>2</sup> and others from this same bag, as also those to which you have the replies, have been laid against me. I dare not write replies on your paper to the articles of the Paris doctors,<sup>3</sup> because I could not conceal them on account of the watch kept over me. It is just as well to leave it over to avoid any harm coming to our faithful friend—you know whom I mean.<sup>4</sup> I recommend him to you.

I should be glad to see you, together with Baron Wenzel [*de Duba*] and Master Christian. I fancy, if you speak to the Pope's under-chamberlain, he will give you permission to visit me. You would have to

<sup>1</sup> This visit, if paid later, would explain what Hus calls 'the negligence in writing' on p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> Michael. A favourite insult of the times. Cf. Stephen Dolein's 'Sacce Wyclif, ora pro nobis' (*Antihussus*, pp. 373, 426).

<sup>3</sup> See next page, *n.* 3.

<sup>4</sup> Gaoler Robert, who carried the letters.

## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 189

speak in Latin before the gaolers, and in going out your man Peter<sup>1</sup> should give them a gratuity in keeping with your rank. I have not dared to keep the articles by me. Make Peter copy my tract *on the Commandments*.<sup>2</sup>

I will answer the charges of the Paris Chancellor if I live;<sup>3</sup> but if I die, God will answer them at the Day of Judgment. I do not know where Železný Jan [*John Barbatus*] is, faithful brother in Christ that he is.

I do not know whether Master Christian is with you. Pray greet him and Baron Wenzel and the rest of the faithful Bohemians.

Do not give way to worry because expenses run up here. Meet the situation as you can. If God shall free the Goose from his prison, He will give you good reason for not regretting these expenses. Please do what is sufficient by means of promises.

If Lord Henry of Plumlow<sup>4</sup> or Stibor of Boczi is with you, please greet them and all the Bohemians.

To-morrow it will be eight weeks since Hus was lodged in the refectory.

Noble and gracious lord, guardian of the truth

<sup>1</sup> P.: *vester Pater*, following *Ep. Piiss* i. 2a. Read *Petr.*—*i.e.*, Petrus Mladenowic.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 154 and 171, and *Mon.* i. 296.

<sup>3</sup> Gerson, the great Chancellor of Paris, had despatched to Archbishop Conrad of Prague (September 24, 1414) a series of articles culled from Hus's *De Ecclesia* (see *Doc.* 523-8). The arrival of Gerson at Constance on February 26 (for date see Finke, *op. cit.* 259) brought them into prominence, and made Chlum, as we have seen, anxious to smuggle out an answer to them from Hus. Hus's intentions seem to have been frustrated by illness, and we find him in later letters still harping on his intended answer to Gerson. The answer, if ever completed, is now lost.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 232. Boczi is a very uncertain reading from the *Ep. Piiss*.



along with Lord Henry [*Lacembok*], stand by my side without flinching till the end comes, when the Lord Jesus Christ will use me for His glory and the blotting out of my sins. I commend this most faithful of friends to you. I am pleased with what you have done. I should be glad to find that my lord the King had given orders for the hearing of my replies to the articles of Wyclif. Oh, that God might inspire his lips, so that he might take his stand with his leading men in support of the truth!

To-day I finished a little tract, *On the Body of Christ*, and yesterday one, *On Matrimony*.<sup>1</sup> Get them copied hereafter. Some Polish knights have paid me a visit,<sup>2</sup> but no Bohemians, except one that came with them.

The following letter forms a pleasant break in the records of Inquisition methods. To understand it we must remember that Hus, when a priest in Prague, had adopted a novel method of advertising his creed. He had found a use for the great bare walls of the Bethlehem Chapel. On these, in addition to the customary pictures, he had painted up sundry theses, once even a long treatise, *On the Six Errors*. This idea Hus seems to have taken from the practice in the monastery at Königsaal, the burial-place of the Bohemian kings. His enemies did not fail to sneer at his twentieth-century methods of advertisement. 'You paint,' wrote Andrew Brod, '*The Ten Commandments* on your walls; would that you kept them in your heart!' (*Doc.* 519).

The letters, undated both in the originals and Palacký, would seem to have been written on March 4 and 5. We infer this from the last sentence of Chlum's reply (see Hardt, *Magnum Constantiense Concilium*, iv. 52, and Finke, *op. cit.* p. 167).

<sup>1</sup> See p. 171. The *De Corpore Christi* is called in the *MONUMENTA De Cæna Domini*.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly Janussius Kalisky and Zaurissius Niger, the ambassadors of Jagiello to the Council, who could therefore obtain access by reason of their office. For other Poles at Constance, see *Doc.* 256.

From another letter of Hus we learn some further details of his dreams, of his own belief in their value, and, apparently John of Chlum's incredulity. (Compare *infra*, p. 222, with p. 192, second sentence.)

XLVIII. To JOHN OF CHLUM

(Without date : March 4, 1415)

Will you please expound my last night's dream? I dreamt that they wanted to destroy all the pictures of Christ in the Bethlehem, and they did so. On rising next morning methought I saw many painters, who had painted other pictures more beautiful, upon which I gazed with joy. And the painters and a great assembly of folk cried out, "Let the priests and bishops come and destroy these pictures of ours!" Whereupon much people rejoiced in the Bethlehem, and I with them. And when I awoke, I found myself laughing.

Note that they had spread it abroad in several quarters that they wanted to destroy the writing on the walls of the Bethlehem Chapel. I will forward a copy of my treatises, which I have copied out in duplicate.<sup>1</sup>

To this letter of Hus we fortunately possess the answer of John of Chlum. It was written by Peter Mladenowic, his secretary, who has added at the close a paragraph of his own, explaining how it came to pass that Hus called Chlum 'the doctor of Biberach' (see p. 155). The letter is a revelation of the sturdy common sense and genial humour of the honest knight. But the Latin is very obscure and crabbed.

JOHN OF CHLUM TO MASTER JOHN HUS

(Without date : March 5, 1415<sup>2</sup>)

My beloved friend, do not be troubled about the hearing,<sup>3</sup> as more than ordinary attention is now being given to this and the

<sup>1</sup> The treatises written in prison. See p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> See last clause and p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> The public audience.

rest of your case. We are hoping that, by God's kindness, all these matters are working out to a holy issue. Only get rid of the other fancies and entanglements of your brain; lay them aside, and give your thoughts to the charges that are to be laid against you, and the reply you are to give. Nevertheless, the truth infallible forbids you to take thought, saying, *When ye shall stand, etc.*, and as follows: *For it shall be given you in that hour what to speak.*<sup>1</sup>

This is the exposition of the dream:—

The picture of Christ painted on the walls of the "House of Bread"<sup>2</sup> is His life, which is to be imitated. Likewise in the same place the Holy Scripture that cannot be broken is represented. Both of these the enemies of Christ's cross attempt to daub out in the evening darkness; for the Sun of righteousness setteth upon them by reason of their misshapen<sup>3</sup> life, and it seems as if the Christ and His Scriptures will be forgotten in the sight of men. But on the morrow, at the rising of the Sun of righteousness, both of these are restored and painted more splendidly by preachers, who proclaim on the housetops what had been spoken in the ear<sup>4</sup> and well-nigh passed into oblivion. Thereupon from all these things great joy arises in the community. And the Goose, although he be laid on the altar, as indeed he is now laid there, and although he shall be distressed by the weakness of the flesh, yet in the time to come, as we trust, he will be with Him Who dwells in the heavens; and as he awakes from the sleep of this miserable life, he will howl in derision and hiss at those destroyers of the picture and of Scripture. Nay, in this present life, by God's blessing, with mighty earnestness he will restore in clearer colours and paint anew those pictures and Scriptures alike for the flock and his beloved friends.

Here endeth the learned doctor of Biberach,<sup>5</sup> who maketh his exposition of this passage in a Daniel's<sup>6</sup> vision to conform with that wherein the goose, floating on the sea, took refuge, as it seemed, on a rock: for both of these indicate a foundation that,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Chlum evidently knew the meaning of Bethlehem. His correspondence shows that he was a well-educated man.

<sup>3</sup> *Difformis* = deformed.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xii. 3; paraphrase only.

<sup>5</sup> P. 155.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. "A Daniel come to judgment."



## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 193

cannot be shaken. Your friends and supporters have no little joy in your letters, although it is true they are known to few.<sup>1</sup> To-day an embassy from the King of the French arrived at Constance.<sup>2</sup>

### XLIX. To JOHN OF CHLUM

(Without date : March 6th, 1415<sup>3</sup>)

Every word you wrote in your last letter gave me excellent comfort. Our learned doctor of Biberach agreeth in his exposition with my own thoughts, though that adage of Cato's holds good, "For dreams have no care,"<sup>4</sup> and also God's command that we *hearken not to dreams*.<sup>5</sup> Yet I hope that the life of Christ, which I painted from His word at the Bethlehem in the hearts of men and which they wished to blot out from the Bethlehem—issuing first of all an order that there should be no preaching in chapels and in the Bethlehem, then afterwards that the Bethlehem should be razed to the ground<sup>6</sup>—I hope, I say, that that life of Christ is being painted up in better fashion by other better preachers than myself amid the rejoicings of the people that love Christ's life.<sup>7</sup> Wherein I will rejoice—as saith our learned doctor<sup>8</sup>—when I awake out of sleep, that is, when I rise from the dead. The writing too on the walls of the Bethlehem still abides,<sup>9</sup> though Palecz is mightily

<sup>1</sup> *Licet constet valde paucis*. Possibly it is the letters that are few.

<sup>2</sup> March 5, 1415. See p. 190.      <sup>3</sup> See p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> See the pseudo *Dicta Catonis (vel Disticha de Moribus)*, ed. Némethy, Pesth, 1895, lib. ii. No. 31; a favourite mediæval book of rhymed proverbs, as we see in the *Piers Plowman*.

<sup>5</sup> Jer. xxix. 8.

<sup>6</sup> P. 79.

<sup>7</sup> *Epist. Piissimæ*: 'Quisne negare potest per Lutherum factum esse.'

<sup>8</sup> *i.e.*, of Biberach; see p. 155.

<sup>9</sup> P. 79.

vexed against it, saying that it was through it that I led the people into errors; nay, he stoutly insists that it be blotted out so as thereby to bring me into utter confusion: moreover as I lay here in weakness, he hailed me, before them all,<sup>1</sup> with a most horrible greeting, of which I will tell you hereafter, if it shall please God.

My thoughts about the points to be raised against me I have committed to the Lord God, to Whom I have appealed and Whom I chose before the commissioners as my judge, my proctor and my advocate,<sup>2</sup> in the plain words: "Let the Lord Jesus be my advocate and proctor, Who will shortly judge you all: to Him I have committed my cause, even as He Himself committed His cause to His Father." It is He that hath said—and his lordship the doctor of Biberach repeats it: *Think not*, etc. For Christ said: *Lay it up therefore in your hearts not to meditate before how you shall answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay.*<sup>3</sup> On which the blessed Jerome<sup>4</sup> saith: "*As if our Lord were to say openly: Fear not, be not terrified: you will come to a conflict, but I am the fighter: you utter words, but I am the speaker.*" Then follow the words: *And you shall be betrayed by your parents and brethren and kinsmen and friends: and some of you they will put to death. "Less pain do evils inflict which are inflicted by them that are without. But more fiercely do those tortures rage*

<sup>1</sup> P.: *coram mulis*; an original uncorrected reading of the *Ep. Pii*. Read *coram multis*. No wonder Bonnechose was puzzled by the words!

<sup>2</sup> He was allowed no other. See p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxi. 14, 15

<sup>4</sup> See next page, n. 1.

## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 195

*within us which we suffer at the hands of them on whose loyalty we presumed: for along with the body's loss we are crucified by the pains of a lost love.*" So Jerome.<sup>1</sup> My pain obviously proceeds from Palecz. Truly our doctor of Biberach rises above Lord Henry [*Lacembok*] and above Master John [*Cardinalis*], rector of Janowicz. As for the rest, please God, it shall be known hereafter.

Let our doctor of Biberach carry out the lesson he has given me and let him keep the secret of my letters to himself,<sup>2</sup> for Christ saith: *A man's enemies shall be they of his own household.*<sup>3</sup> Item, *you shall be betrayed by your parents, etc.*<sup>4</sup> Farewell, and all of you who are together, have constancy in Constance! Please give my greeting to all my friends but judiciously, lest they should say, "How do you know that he greeted us?"

In the recently published *Diary of Cardinal Fillastre* we read: 'In the meantime'—*i.e.*, before February 16—'we dealt with the errors of Wyclif. But the whole business was put off, through our handling the way of cession.' (ed. Finke, *op. cit.* p. 166). This last was a proposal of the French Cardinals D'Ailli and Fillastre—first made on February 15—that the three rival Popes should all resign. This led to the delays in the further treatment of the case of Hus to which Chlum alludes—'the foreign and irrelevant matter'—in the following letter to Hus. The matter of the cession was further discussed on February 21 and 28, and by the beginning of March had become the settled conviction of the Council. On March 5—the day of the arrival of the embassy of the French King (Charles)—the Council proposed to the Pope that he should issue a bull consenting to this 'method

<sup>1</sup> Not from Jerome at all, but loosely quoted from Bede's *In Luca Evang. Expositio*, c. xxi. in *loc.* (ed. Giles or Migne).

<sup>2</sup> *De literis*—*i.e.*, how Robert the gaoler brought them in and out as well as their existence. See also first sentence on p. 193, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 36.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxi. 16.



of cession,' and naming proctors who should carry out his resignation. John of course refused (Hardt, iv. 523, Finke, *op. cit.* 167). John of Chlum's optimism shows how little he and the other Bohemians understood the working of the Inquisition. For the time being, however, further proceedings were postponed.

JOHN OF CHLUM TO JOHN HUS

(*Without date: first week in March 1415*)

Dearest friend, you ought to know that your case and the cause of truth never moved on so brightly as at present, although some other foreign and irrelevant matters have cropped up, so that your case is delayed for the moment.

All your friends, especially Christian, are paying court to the good widow, who is a second widow of Sarepta!<sup>1</sup>

That tattered three-cornered bit of paper has come to hand and has been duly read.<sup>2</sup> Its arrival without the least delay could not have been so quickly anticipated.

Our doctor of Biberach<sup>3</sup> only asks for a reasonable excuse for writing; from which you can guess his incurable itch for scribbling! I beg you to send some comforting words to your good-hearted friends.

In the following letter we are introduced to the 'consolatory rhymes,' which Hus wrote in prison, as Mladenovic puts it, 'to pass the time and console himself.' Their value as hexameters may be judged from the third line,

'Jonam, Danielelem, tres pu. Susannam, quia fuere' (!)

The complaint of 'negligence in writing,' would point to a date

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xvii. 9 ff. Christian Prachaticz, whose attentions to Hus's landlady, widow Faithful of the bakehouse, with the sign of the White Pigeons, Chlum here jokingly mentions, soon after this was arrested on the suit of Michael the Pleader and brought before the Patriarch of Constantinople. Thirty articles were presented against him. But on the intervention of Sigismund, who had a special interest in him as a learned astronomer, he was released, and allowed to return to Prague (March 18-19) with a letter from Lacembok: 'There it is feared he will sow other lies, as is the manner of all the Wyclifists' (*Doc.* 542). This helps to fix the date of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 172. Paper evidently once more running out.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 155. Chlum had written only a day or two before. See p. 191. Hence the allusion and the date.

## IMPRISONMENT AT THE BLACKFRIARS 197

later than the preceding letter to Chlum, while the references to John Barbatus, as well as to Easter, add strength to this argument. From the tone of the letter it is evident that Hus was depressed. It is evident also that the visit of the inquisitors had been interrupted by the new stir over the Pope's proposed abdication. The answer to Gerson, it seems, still hangs fire.

### L. TO HIS FRIENDS

(*Without date : middle March 1415*)

I send a rhyming answer plain,  
To match your letter's cheerful strain,  
The whale did Jonah safe restore :  
No marks of lions Daniel bore :  
Three Hebrews were by fire unharmed,  
Susannah charges false disarmed.<sup>1</sup>  
And why? Just, innocent and pure,  
Each kept in God a trust most sure,  
Their righteous Lord, Who sets those free  
Who hope in Him eternally.  
'Tis He, Who can th' imprisoned Goose  
From durance vile in mercy loose.  
Yet bonds do purge his former stains  
And contrite tears turn joys to pains :  
That he, Christ's prisoner, may learn  
To bear reproaches and discern  
Curses and shame in their true light,  
To bruise the tempter's head, to fight  
And conquer death : or else to wrest  
From life itself its guerdon best.

The God of mercy preserve you and give you comfort in His grace, and grant to you with myself constancy in Constance ;<sup>2</sup> for if we shall be constant,

<sup>1</sup> These were favourite illustrations with Hus. See p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 159, 160, 195.

we shall see the Lord coming to our aid. For the first time I am now learning to understand the book of Psalms,<sup>1</sup> to pray as I ought, to ponder over the insults of Christ and the sufferings of the martyrs, as Isaiah saith: *Vexation alone shall make you understand what you hear.*<sup>2</sup> Again: *What doth he know, that hath not been tried?*<sup>3</sup>

I don't understand what our learned doctor of Biberach wants. The Goose conjectures nothing from his negligence in writing,<sup>4</sup> except that he is well in body. May his soul's health especially be confirmed by the Lord! for it is his soul's health, no less than his bodily health, that I hope is being improved, and will after death be perfected in bliss with all the saints.

In prison hid from human sight,  
 The stated offices of night,  
 The gospel readings as they fall,  
 Litanies, vigils do not pall.  
 The "hours" pass lightly:<sup>5</sup> for this road  
 The Master went, Who bore our load.  
 This is my passion, naught indeed,  
 Or slight, if I from sin be freed.  
 May Christ the Lord stand by His own,  
 Lest Antichrist do gulp me down!

Rejoice all of you, who are one in the Lord. Greet one another, and prepare yourselves worthily to eat the Lord's Body before Easter. I shall be without it, so far as the outward elements are concerned,<sup>6</sup> as now

<sup>1</sup> In 1404 Hus had written a commentary of some length on Psalms cx.-cxix. See *Mon.* ii. 229 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxviii. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ecclus. xxxiv. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 188 n.

<sup>5</sup> *Nocturnus, gradus, litaniae, singulae horae*, etc. *Gradus* seems a loose use for the more usual *gradale*.

<sup>6</sup> *Quoad sacramentalem perceptionem.*



for a long time I have been without it; and still shall be, as long as God wills. And no wonder, since Christ's apostles and many other saints in prisons and desert abodes were likewise without it.

I rejoice that you stand together and that Železný Brada<sup>1</sup> is in good health with you all. So am I too, trusting as I do in Jesus; but I shall be in better health after death, if I keep God's commands to the end. Would that God would give me time to write against the lies of the Chancellor of Paris, who so presumptuously and unjustly before the world hath dared to charge his neighbour with heresy.<sup>2</sup> But perchance God will cut short his writing either by my death or his, and in His judgment will settle the matter better than any writing of mine could do.

Meanwhile in Constance the struggle between the Council and John XXIII., which had begun in the proposal for his abdication, had rapidly reached a crisis. John realised that his last throw must be made. On March 20<sup>3</sup> he left Constance 'in an indecent disguised lay dress' 'in the darkness of a foggy night.' Two days later the Council received news that he had arrived at Schaffhausen. Hus soon learned the news, and adds an interesting comment.

If Hus's first letter after the flight of John gives little indication of the excitement at Constance, his second letter, written three days later, throws a vivid side-light on the confusion. Hus himself ran some danger of starvation. Hitherto the Pope had paid ten florins a week for Hus's support and the expenses of his imprisonment. Not only was this supply cut off, but, as

<sup>1</sup> These words mean "Ironbeard." Palacký suggests that the person intended is therefore John Barbatius (for whom, see p. 44), who on p. 189 is called Železný Jan, "Bearded John," and of whom Hus there says that he does not know where he is. Cf. p. 219, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> P. 189, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup> For the date see App. M. p. 360 of my *Age of Hus*.

## 200 LETTERS WRITTEN DURING THE

we learn from an anonymous letter of April 2, provisions in Constance ran very short (*Doc.* 543). The country folk were too uncertain of the future to bring in, as hitherto, their stores. Hus also was in no small alarm.

### LI. TO HIS FRIENDS AFTER THE POPE'S FLIGHT

(*Without date: March 21, 1415*)

I have been much comforted by the visit of the Bohemian nobles; but I was grieved that I could not see you. Master Christian has left to carry a despatch of Lord Henry's,<sup>1</sup> and so has Master Jesenicz. The Council is in confusion, I fancy, because of the Pope's flight. The reason as I have learnt is: in all our transactions whether contemplated or actually in hand God should be put first, human reason second. This they have ignored, with the result that you see, etc.

If God shall give me a happy issue, I will not forget the faithful friend—you know whom I mean: if the issue is otherwise, I commend him to you.<sup>2</sup>

I have got to know that Lord Wilhelm<sup>3</sup> is my friend. Please give him my thanks.

I noticed Baron Wenzel de Duba in tears while he was speaking to me. Lord Mysska<sup>4</sup> was very friendly.

<sup>1</sup> Lacembok's. For the arrest and release of Christian Prachaticz see p. 196, n. 1. It is possible that the real cause of his departure was concealed from Hus, though cf. p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Gaoler Robert again.

<sup>3</sup> *Wilhelmus* (a good instance of Hus's Latin) is probably William Zajiic of Hasenburg (see p. 232, where he is associated with Mysska).

<sup>4</sup> Wenzel Mysska de Hradek, whose name we find on the petition of the Polish and Czech nobles of May 13 (see *infra*, pp. 204 and 232).

## LII. TO THE SAME

(March 24, 1415)

All my gaolers are now taking to flight. I have nothing to eat and I don't know what is going to happen to me in prison. Please go with the other nobles to the King and get him to take some final steps in my case, lest he fall into sin and confusion on my account.

Please also come to me with the Bohemian nobles, for I must have a word with you.

Noble Baron John and Baron Wenzel and the rest of you, make haste and see my lord the King. There is danger in delay. It is so urgent that it should be done at once. Think carefully and quickly of the other things I want from you.

I am afraid that the master of the Pope's household will carry me off with him by night; for to-day he has been hanging about the monastery. The Bishop of Constance hath sent letters to me hinting that he wishes to have no responsibility for me. The cardinals have done the same.

If you love your poor Goose, get the King to send me guards from his own court or to set me free from prison this very evening.

Written in prison (note the introit of the day, "O Lord, make no long tarrying") late on Sunday night.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Datum in carcere, Domine ne longe, dominico die sero.* The introit, *Domine ne longe* (Ps. xxi.), is the proper introit for Palm Sunday, which on this year fell on March 24. Bonnechose ineptly translates: 'My good lord (Chlum), do not delay.' *Dies dominicus* by itself means 'Palm Sunday' (see Ducange), but should not here be pressed, as with Hus 'dies dominicus' is frequently used for the more correct *Dies Dominica* (Sunday).



## Part VI.—Letters Written from the Franciscan Friary

(*June 5, 1415—July 6, 1415*)

ON the flight of John, as Mladenowic informs us, 'the keys of the prison in which the Master was detained were handed over to the King, and he could now with honour have released him.' Sigismund, who had overcome all his scruples concerning the safe-conduct, preferred to deliver Hus to the Bishop of Constance, upon whom, on the flight of the Pope, the care of a prisoner of the Inquisition would naturally fall. According to the statement of Hus in the last letter, the bishop—and the cardinals also, at first—had already refused the charge. Probably that accomplished timeserver was waiting to see how the land lay and what action Sigismund would take now that he was free to act. But on receiving Sigismund's command he delayed no longer. The Bishop, we read, fearing an attempt at release, 'for the prison of the Blackfriars was outside the walls and the guards were few and careless, that same night took Hus, fettered in a boat, to his own castle of Gottlieben'—a few hours in fact after the last letter was written (March 24). The precaution of the Bishop—who provided for the boat a guard of a hundred and seventy armed men—shows that he expected some attempt at release, perhaps with the connivance of Sigismund. Possibly if the last letter of Hus had been despatched earlier something might have been done. As it was Hus was safely imprisoned in the west wing of Gottlieben, and the opportunity lost for ever. 'There he lay in fetters in an airy tower.' He could walk about all day, but 'at night was handcuffed on his bed to the wall,' to a block still preserved in the Museum at Constance. The 'airy tower' was a welcome change after the latrines. But at Gottlieben Hus missed the gaoler Robert, who had formed the link with his friends outside. Not a single letter or document written from Gottlieben

has been preserved for us. So far as news from Hus is concerned, the months of his second imprisonment are a sheer blank.

The months of silence were, however, big with momentous issues both for Hus and the Church. But at these great issues we may only lightly glance. The course of the fugitive Pope was soon run. Within a few weeks John was deposed 'as unworthy, useless, and harmful, a chosen vessel of all sins.' The papal arms were removed from his dwelling, and he himself, after solemnly agreeing to his own deposition, was sent 'with only a cook' to Gottlieben, and confined in the east tower. So for two days Pope John, convicted, according to the Council, on fifty-four charges, was a fellow prisoner with John Hus. History contains few instances of greater contrast, certainly none more ironical in its final issue. The Council had condemned the Pope for the foulest of crimes. According to their own showing, whatever be its worth, John XXIII. was a monster scarcely fit to live. His punishment was a trifling term of imprisonment and a later reward. Hus, on the contrary, was acknowledged even by his enemies to be a man illustrious for his purity of life. But he had dared to follow one who thought for himself. His very virtues but made it the more needful that he should be burnt. Revolt against its system was the one crime for which the mediæval Church had no pardons to sell.

With the outbreak of the struggle between John and the Council, the trial of Hus, as we have seen, had been suspended. But after the deposition of the Pope there was once more leisure for the heretic. In fact, as soon as it was plain that the Pope's flight would prove his undoing, the Council returned to its task. On April 6 a new Commission was appointed, with D'Ailli at the head, to examine the heresies of Wyclif and Hus. But D'Ailli was too busy to give the needed attention, so on the 17th the matter was transferred to another committee of four, one from each of the four nations. On May 4 they brought in an interim report. Wyclif was condemned on no less than two hundred and sixty different counts, though the main stress was laid on the famous forty-five articles. Wyclif's writings were ordered to be burnt, 'his bones to be dug up and cast out of the consecrated ground, provided they could be identified from those of Christians buried near' (Hardt iv. 142-57).

The greater involves the less, and the condemnation of Wyclif practically sealed the fate of Hus, though for technical reasons

connected with the absence of a pope, formal condemnation was allowed to stand over. In the ordinary course of events nothing further would have been heard of the prisoner at Gottlieben. Hus would have been left to rot in his dungeon, until his spirit was broken, or the time convenient for an *auto da fé*. But the friends of Hus were resolved to give publicity to the trial and secure the public hearing that Sigismund had promised. A week after the Commission had brought in its report, the Czechs and Poles showed how little they understood the procedure of the Inquisition by handing in a protest, drawn up by Peter Mladenovic, against the imprisonment of Hus without proper trial. They enlarged once more on the safe-conduct (May 13). The Council replied (May 16) that as far back as 1411 Hus had been tried and condemned. As for his pretended safe-conduct, it was only obtained by his friends fifteen days after his arrest. The Czechs, still unconscious of the real drift of events, twice again presented their petitions, urging for Hus a speedy public hearing, putting in the discredited certificates of the Bishop of Nazareth, though "Bishop Sup-with-the-devil," as he was called from his famous meal with Hus, had already retracted, and slipped away home in disguise. Hus, they further pleaded, 'should be released from his chains, and put into the care of some bishop, that he might recruit his strength' and so prepare for his trial. In Bohemia the mutterings of the coming storm could already be heard. Two assemblies in May, at Brünn and Prague, of the nobles of Bohemia and Moravia despatched to Sigismund, as the heir to the throne, a warning 'strengthened by two hundred and fifty seals,' to release 'the beloved master and Christian preacher' from further imprisonment, and send him back to Bohemia after first granting him a public hearing. To please Sigismund this last was finally granted. Such a public hearing or trial was in reality an unheard-of act of grace on the part of the Inquisition, only wrung out by political necessities. That august court made a rule of keeping their trials absolutely secret. That there should be no mistake as to the real meaning of this concession, the Council had already sent (Whitsunday, May 19) a deputation of eight delegates, with D'Ailli at the head, to inform Hus of the thirty articles which had been proved against him. We shall find a reference to this deputation in one of the later letters (see p. 216). A fortnight later (June 5), for the convenience of this trial, Hus was brought back in



chains from Gottlieben to Constance early in the morning, and lodged in a tower adjoining the Franciscan convent to await his final trial, Pope John doubtless looking on with interest at the heresiarch's departure.

On arriving at the Franciscan convent Hus found opportunity for resuming his correspondence with his friends. If the date that von Hardt gives for his transference from Gottlieben be correct (June 5 ; see Hardt, iv. 306), one letter at least<sup>1</sup> would appear to have been despatched that very morning. Hus, we note, is still sanguine as to the effects of a public audience, though his letter shows that he contemplates other issues with resignation. One little detail of this third imprisonment is not without interest. Hus tells us (p. 218) that for the first time for some months his food was good and plentiful.

#### LIII. To JOHN OF CHLUM

*(Without date : morning, June 5, 1415)*

My dear friend in Christ, still arrange for all the nobles to have access to the King and Council ; and get the King and Council to do as they have both already stated "in the hearing that is to take place you will have a brief written statement and to this you shall reply." They can drive both Sigismund and the Council to this by telling them that by God's help I will make a plain statement of the truth. I would rather that my body be consumed by fire than that I should thus be kept basely out of sight by them, in order that all Christendom may know the last words I have spoken. I beg my friends the nobles for God's sake to act by showing to the end their diligence and constancy. My hope in the Lord is always firm.

Lord John, my most trusty and gracious supporter, may God be your reward ! I beg you not to leave until you see the end reached. Would that you

<sup>1</sup> Palacký gives three ; but I have adopted a different order.

might see me being led to the flames rather than so craftily smothered here! I still cherish the hope that God Almighty is able to snatch me from their hands through the merits of the saints. Let me have the hint if to-morrow I am to be brought up for a hearing. Greet all my friends in Bohemia,<sup>1</sup> beseeching them to pray God on my behalf. If I am to remain a prisoner, let them pray that I may await death without failing of heart. Exhort the masters to stand firm in the truth; also our special friends, the virgin Petra<sup>2</sup> and all her household and Master Jesenicz,<sup>3</sup> urging him to marry. Beg my friend Girzik<sup>4</sup> and the rector<sup>5</sup> to rest content, though I have not been able to do enough for them in return for their service; please let them give my greetings to my friends of either sex. I know not who will repay those who have advanced money, except the Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake they have advanced it. Yet I should like some of the richer people to club together and pay the poorer ones. But I am afraid that the proverb will be fulfilled in some cases: "Co s očí, to z mysli" ("Out of sight, out of mind").<sup>6</sup>

Later in the day, though probably still early in the morning, Hus was brought up for the long-expected public audience. A congregation of the Council had been summoned to meet in the refectory of the Franciscan convent. The intention was to satisfy Sigismund by a public condemnation, but in the absence of Hus himself. So the psalm customary for an inquiry into heresy (Psalm l.) was read, and the thirty articles against him formally presented. An attempt was then made to deprive Hus of the

<sup>1</sup> *In regno.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> Who had left in March (p. 200).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 151, where we learn that he was a scholar of Hus by name George. From p. 212 we learn that he had become a rector.

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.*, Cardinalis.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep. Piiss. G. 4: Tzo so-czy, to smysli*, which Luther (*Ep. Piissimæ*) and the *Monumenta* naturally left untranslated.

grace of recantation, by the putting in of the letter which he had left at Prague (*supra*, p. 147). There only remained the formal reading of a sentence already determined. This crafty plan was frustrated. Before it could be carried through Mladenowic stirred up Chlum and Duba to hasten to Sigismund. The Emperor despatched Lewes, the Count Palatine, and the burgrave Frederick of Nuremberg, with orders that nothing should be done until Hus himself was present; while the friends of Hus, to prevent inaccurate or mutilated excerpts, put in genuine copies of his works, on the condition that they should be restored to them—a precaution that, as we learn from the following letter of Hus, was not needless. So Hus had at length his desire, and stood before his enemies. Very different was the reality to his dreams. Instead of an oration before a listening senate, he was met, when he attempted to explain, with angry shouts: 'Have done with your sophistries!' 'Say yes or no!' If he remained silent, they clamoured that he consented. As the tumult grew the trial was adjourned until the 7th, and Hus removed in the custody of the Bishop of Riga. 'Do not fear for me,' he said, as he grasped the hands of his friends. 'We do not fear,' they answered. 'I know you do not,' he added. As Mladenowic and Chlum watched him mount the steps of the tower adjoining the convent, they saw him 'smile, as if in gladness after his mockery, and hold out a hand as if blessing the people.' That same night, as if to reassure them of his constancy, Hus wrote to his friends in Constance. It is remarkable that Hus already clearly discerned the real issue on which he would be condemned (see *infra*, p. 208, n 1). Another letter was written the following day to his unfailing friend John of Chlum, as well as a third to Peter Mladenowic.

#### LIV. TO HIS FRIENDS STAYING ON IN CONSTANCE

(Without date : June 5, 1415)

God Almighty gave me to-day a stout and courageous heart. Two articles are now struck out. I hope, by God's grace, more will be struck out. They were all crying out against me like the Jews against Jesus. They have not yet reached the main point at issue—to wit, that I should confess that all



the articles can be found in my little books.<sup>1</sup> You made a mistake in putting in the tract *Against a Secret Adversary*, along with the treatise *On the Church*. Put in nothing except the *Treatises against Stanislaus and Palecz*. The nobles did well to demand that my manuscript should be restored to them; for some cried out, "Let it be burnt," especially Michael the Pleader, whose voice I detected. I feel I have not in the whole company of the clergy a single friend except "the Father"<sup>2</sup> and a Polish doctor with whom I am not acquainted. I am indebted to the Bishop of Leitomischl for a good turn, though he said no more than, "A co sem tobě učinil?" ("And what have I done for you?"). I am very pleased that you have collected the articles; it is well to publish and re-issue them in that form, etc. The leading men of the Council said that I should have another public hearing. They did not wish to hear my disquisition<sup>3</sup> on the Church. Give my greetings to the faithful nobles and friends of the truth. Pray God for me; for there is much need. I fancy they will not admit in my favour the opinion of St. Augustine concerning the Church and its members, both predestined and foreknown, and concerning evil prelates.<sup>4</sup> Oh, that a hearing might be granted to me in order to reply to the arguments with which they intend to attack the articles that appear in my little books! I imagine that many who cry me down would be put to silence. His will be done, as it is in heaven!

<sup>1</sup> The real issue on which he was condemned. See *infra*, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> *Distinctionem*.

<sup>4</sup> See *Doc.* 204, 226. In this latter passage Hus gives his references to Augustine, but very vaguely. They are really taken from Wyclif's *De Ecclesia*, c. i.

From the conclusion of the following letter to Chlum we see that Hus had heard before he left Gottlieben of the arrest and imprisonment of Jerome of Prague. On hearing at Prague of the rupture between John and the Council, Jerome had hastened to Constance, in spite of the wish of Hus to the contrary (p. 182). There, on April 4, he posted a notice on the gates affirming the orthodoxy of Hus. This done, he deemed it wiser to withdraw to Ueberlingen, whence he wrote to the Council asking for a safe-conduct. On April 7 he once more returned to Constance, and affixed another address to Sigismund and the Council on the doors of the Cathedral. He had come, he said, of his own free will to answer all accusations of heresy. But two days later he changed his mind, and slipped away from the city, in his haste leaving his sword behind him in his lodgings in the St. Paulgasse. He fled towards Bohemia, but at Hirsau was betrayed into an argument, in which he called the Council a synagogue of Satan. This led to his arrest (April 24). On the discovery from his papers of his identity he was forwarded to Constance loaded with chains. He arrived on May 23, and was taken at once to the Franciscan convent, 'patiently carrying in his hand his iron fetters and long chain.' There he was examined in a somewhat tumultuous congregation of the Council, and afterwards carried by night to a dungeon in the cemetery of St. Paul, and chained hand and foot 'to a bench too high to sit on.' For two days he was left to starve on a scanty supply of bread and water, until Peter Mladenowic found his prison and bribed the gaoler to give him better food. The darkness and foul surroundings soon brought on a sickness, from which with difficulty he recovered, only to find that in the interval his friend and leader, John Hus, had been burnt at the stake. The two men were destined never to meet.

#### LV. To JOHN OF CHLUM

(Without date : June 6, 1415)

To-morrow morning at ten o'clock<sup>1</sup> I have to make my reply: first, as to whether I am willing to state

<sup>1</sup> Many MSS. read *hora sexta* instead of *hora XVI*. Reckoning time ecclesiastically, *hora sexta* would be midnight. It is possible that time was not reckoned by Hus in this way, and that he intended 'six A.M.,' not at all an unusual hour for meetings.

that each of the articles taken from my books is erroneous, and that I abjure them and preach the opposite; secondly, whether I will confess that I preached those articles which have been proved against me by witnesses;<sup>1</sup> thirdly, that I abjure them. If God in His grace would bring Sigismund to the hearing, I should be glad for him to hear the words which the gracious Saviour will put into my mouth. If they would give me pen and paper, I should make reply, I trust, by God's grace as follows: "I, John Hus, a servant of Christ in hope, refuse to state that any one of the articles taken from my book is erroneous, lest I condemn the opinion of the holy doctors, and especially of the blessed Augustine. Secondly, I refuse to confess that I asserted, preached, and held the articles with which I have been charged by false witnesses. Thirdly, I refuse to abjure, lest I commit perjury."

For God's sake look after the letters carefully, and see that they are carried with like caution to Bohemia, lest grave dangers result to individuals. If by any chance I am not able to write any more to your dear lordship, I entreat you and all my friends to remember me, and to pray that God may grant constancy to me, together with my beloved brother in Christ, Master Jerome, because I imagine he also will suffer death, as I have gathered from the commissioners of the Council.

On the following letter Luther (*Ep. Piiss. G. 1*) comments: 'A beautiful instance of that spiritual experience of which the apostle Paul speaks—"Strength is made strong in weakness."'

<sup>1</sup> See previous letter, p. 208, n. 1.



This letter, without date, is attributed by Palacký to June 5, presumably early in the morning. But the audience that day was too hurried to well fulfil the conditions of the last clause. We think it is better to take it as written with a view to the adjourned audience. In the effects of this audience, after his former experience, Hus has ceased to have much confidence.

## LVI. TO PETER MLADENOWIC

(Without date : June 6, 1415)

I dare not rashly say with St. Peter that *I shall never be offended in Christ, although all should be offended*,<sup>1</sup> seeing that I have incomparably less zeal and courage than he. For Christ has never plainly called me *blessed* like Peter,<sup>2</sup> nor has He promised me so many gifts: the attack too is fiercer, more bewildering, and carried on by more numerous foes. Therefore what I say is that, having hope in Christ Jesus, I intend, so long as I shall hear His message,<sup>3</sup> to cleave to the truth with your help and that of the saints, even unto death. If Baron John [*of Chlum*] incurs loss by reason of his expectations about myself, make it up to him, dear Peter, pending your return, so far as concerns the master of the Mint and his wife, who boldly pledged their credit,<sup>4</sup> and also as regards my other friends, known to the rector who

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Dum audivero formam*, the exact sense of which seems doubtful.

<sup>4</sup> The master of the Mint from 1406-19 was Peter Swojšin Zmrzlík, whose wife, Anna of Frimburg, had much influence with Queen Sophia. It was at the house of this master of the Mint that the Bishop of Nazareth gave his famous certificate of orthodoxy to Hus (p. 143.) He was one of the arbitrators to whom the case of Hus was referred on July 6, 1411 (see p. 41), and in a popular song of 1418 (*Doc.* 692) is spoken of as one of the chief heretics,

read with me.<sup>1</sup> If I have a horse left with a car, it ought to go to Baron John. Master Martin, however, if he is alive—or, at any rate, Master Christian, in whom I have complete confidence<sup>2</sup>—will make you a payment from the four guineas—I wish I could say ten guineas! But no sum of money, be assured, can adequately repay your fervent, steadfast, loyal love of the truth and the kind offices and considerations you have shown me in my troubles. May God be your exceeding reward, for I have naught to reward you with. If I ever should live in Prague again, I should like you to share everything with me as freely as my own brother; but the possibility of my return to Prague depends entirely upon the grace of God. I desire it not, if it is not the will of our Father Who is in heaven. My travelling breviary,<sup>3</sup> which I bequeathed to Master Martin, will pass into the possession<sup>4</sup> of some one of the friends still with me. Dispose of my books according to the instructions I gave to Master Martin,<sup>5</sup> and accept any of Wyclif's works you care to have. At present my chief distress is over our brethren, who, I imagine, will suffer persecution unless the Lord lay bare His arm; and I fear that many may be offended. Please, now as ever, give my affectionate greetings to all the Bohemian and Polish nobles, together with my thanks—and especially Baron Wenzel, etc., whom I desire to see present at the hearing of my case. Farewell in Christ Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> *Plebannus meus scholaris*—i.e., Girzik. See p. 206 n.

<sup>2</sup> In spite of his apparent relapse. See p. 196 n. and 200, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Viaticus*, a breviary adapted to the use of travellers.

<sup>4</sup> P.: *cedet*; perhaps read *cedat*.   <sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 151.

On the 7th Hus was again brought before the Council. The friary was surrounded by the town guard, and at an early hour the Council assembled for Mass. While the ritual was proceeding the sun was eclipsed, to the consternation of all. An hour later, about 8 A.M., Hus was brought before the court. This time Sigismund was present, so better order was maintained and more freedom given to the accused. Hus was first charged with holding Wyclif's doctrine of remanence. This he denied. D'Ailli then went off into an argument to prove that Hus as a Realist was driven into remanence. Hus listened in patience, but when an Englishman took up the same tale he burst out: 'This is the logic of school-lads.' But another Englishman had the courage to declare: 'Hus is right. What have these quibbles to do with a matter of faith?'

Zabarella then pointed out the number and standing of the witnesses against him. Hus replied that his witnesses were God and his conscience. 'We cannot,' retorted D'Ailli, 'give our verdict according to your conscience, but according to the evidence.' Hus had maintained that he was accused by his enemies, one of the few pleas to which the Inquisition ever attached importance. To this D'Ailli now turned: 'You say that you suspect Palecz. Palecz has behaved with the greatest kindness. He has extracted the articles in a milder way than they are contained in your book. You go so far as to call the Chancellor of Paris your enemy, than whom you cannot find in all Christendom a more renowned doctor.'

One by one the old controversies and disputes were brought into court: the forty-five articles, the burning of the books, the expulsion of the Germans, and the rest. The day ended with some plain advice from Sigismund. He owned that he had given Hus a safe-conduct. As regards those who claimed that this was *ultra vires*, he was not careful to answer in the matter: 'for I have told them that I will not defend any heretic who is obstinately determined to stick to his heresy. So I counsel you to fling yourself wholly on the grace of the Council; the quicker the better, lest you fall into a worse plight.' Hus was then removed to the prison (Mladenowic's *Relatio* in *Doc.* 276-85).

That same evening Hus wrote to his friends, giving a vivid account of the day's proceedings.



## LVII. TO HIS FRIENDS STAYING ON IN CONSTANCE

(Without date: June 7, 1415<sup>1</sup>)

I, Master John Hus, in hope a servant of Jesus Christ, earnestly desiring that Christ's faithful ones may take no occasion of scandal after my decease through deeming me an obstinate heretic, as they call me, do hereby write these words as a memorial to the friends of the truth, calling Christ Jesus to witness, for Whose law I have been longing to die: First, in very many private hearings, and subsequently in public hearings before the Council, I declared that I was willing to submit myself to guidance and control, to recantation and to punishment, if I were convinced that I had written, taught, or in my reply stated aught that had been contrary to the truth. Furthermore, fifty doctors, commissioned, according to their own statement, by the Council, after being frequently censured by me for false extracts from the articles, and that too in a public hearing before the Council, declined to give me any instruction in private, nay, declined to confer with me, saying, "You have to abide by the Council's decision";<sup>2</sup> while the Council, on my quoting, in a public hearing, the words of Christ or of the holy doctors, either derided me or said they could not understand me, and the doctors stated that I was bringing in irrelevant arguments. However, one of the cardinals, prominent in the Council and a member of the Commission,<sup>3</sup> said in the public hearing of my case, holding a paper in his hands:

<sup>1</sup> Some historians have taken this letter to refer to the audience of June 5. But Sigismund was not present on that day (see p. 207).

<sup>2</sup> See p. 224.

<sup>3</sup> Peter D'Ailli of Cambray (*Doc.* 276).

“Here is an argument propounded by a master of theology:<sup>1</sup> reply to it.” It was the argument about the common essence which, I maintained, is present in the elements. He afterwards broke down, though reputed to be a most learned doctor of theology, so I went on to give him an account of the common created essence which is the first created *esse*, imparted to each several creature, and from which he wished to prove the remanence of the material bread. However, he soon came to the end of his tether and was reduced to silence. Then at once an English doctor<sup>2</sup> rose to carry on the discussion, but he broke down in the same way. He was followed by another English doctor, who in a private hearing had remarked to me that Wyclif wanted to destroy all learning,<sup>3</sup> and that in each of his books and in his logical reasoning he laid down erroneous positions. He rose to his feet and began to discuss the multiplication of the body of Christ in the host; and broke down in his argument. When told to be quiet, he shouted out, “This fellow is cleverly deceiving the Council; have a care lest the Council be deceived as it was by Berengarius.”<sup>4</sup> When he had finished,

<sup>1</sup> *Magister sacrae theologiae*. M.S.T., S.T.P., and D.D. are almost interchangeable in the Middle Ages.

<sup>2</sup> From Hardt, v. 97, we read there were present in the Council ‘sixteen (English) masters in theology.’ Some of their names will be found in Hardt, v. 21-8. But it is impossible to identify the reference.

<sup>3</sup> This doctor was not without some justification for this remark. See my *Age of Wyclif*, p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> At the Synod of Rome in 1059 Berengarius was condemned for his disbelief in Transubstantiation, and fell upon his face and retracted. But on returning to Tours he once more preached his original ideas with increased vigour. Hus’s position and that of Berengarius were practically the same, as Hus recognises in *Mon.* i. 164. But his knowledge of Berengarius was probably wholly derived from Gratian’s *Decretum*, ed. Migne, p. 1754.

a man began a noisy speech on the created common *esse*; but the crowd shouted him down. I stood up, however, and asked that he might be heard, while I said to him, "Stick to your argument; I should like to answer you." But he broke down like the others, and muttered in a temper, "It's heresy." What a clamour, what hootings, hissings, and blasphemy arose against me in that assembly, is well known to Barons Wenzel de Duba and John of Chlum and Peter his secretary, brave soldiers and lovers of God's truth that they are. Though I was often overwhelmed by the loud uproar, I said at last, "I thought that in this Council there would be greater reverence, piety, and discipline." Whereupon Sigismund ordered silence, and they all began to listen. But the Cardinal who presided over the Council<sup>1</sup> said, "You talked more humbly at the castle."<sup>2</sup> "Yes," said I, "because no one was shouting at me then, but here every one is crying me down." He answered, "This is what the Council wants to know: do you wish to stand by your request for instruction?" "Yes," said I "most certainly, according to my protests." He replied, "Take this for the instruction you want: the doctors declare that the articles extracted from your books are erroneous: you ought to withdraw them and abjure the views charged against you by witnesses." Sigismund, however, said, "You shall have a written statement shortly, and you will reply to that." The Cardinal said: "This will take place at the next hearing." The Council then adjourned. God knows what temptations I suffered after it was all over.

<sup>1</sup> John de Bronhiaco (Eubel *s.v.*), Cardinal of Ostia (June 2, 1405—February 16, 1426).

<sup>2</sup> *In castro*; at Gottlieben (see pp. 204 and 263).



After a night of sleepless pain, 'toothache, vomiting, headache, and stone,' Hus was brought up for his final hearing. Sigismund once more was present. Thirty-nine articles extracted from his *De Ecclesia* and other works were presented against him, and read aloud by an English delegate. Then Hus was allowed to make his limitations and exceptions. But one work, as Hus tells us (*infra*, p. 218), was not in evidence. Other charges were also introduced: his sermons to the laity against scandalous priests, and especially his celebration of the sacraments while still under excommunication. When Hus owned to this last, Zabarella made a sign to the notary that special record should be made. On the whole the trial was kept well in hand, in spite of the temptation of side issues. One interlude, however, is historical. Hus was defending the famous tenet of Wyclif: 'If a pope, bishop, or prelate is in mortal sin, then he is not a pope, bishop, or prelate.' He added incautiously that it applied to temporal rulers; 'a king in mortal sin is not really a king in the sight of God.' Sigismund was leaning at that moment out of one of the windows telling Frederick of Nuremberg 'that in all Christendom there was not a greater heretic than Hus.' The Council saw their opportunity. 'Call the King,' shouted the prelates; 'bring him here, for this matter concerns him.' 'John Hus,' said Sigismund with dignity, when Hus had repeated his statement, 'no one lives without sin.' 'It is not enough for you,' said D'Ailli, 'that you try by your writings and teachings to decry and overthrow the spiritual estate, you now wish to hurl down the throne and royal power.' Hus tried to turn the tide by asking, 'If John XXIII. was truly Pope, why was he deposed?' 'Baldassarre,' answered Sigismund, 'was truly Pope, but was deposed from the Papacy on account of his notorious crimes.' Hus then fell back on a fine distinction between 'quoad meritum' and 'quoad officium,' and the arguments drifted off to the stock illustrations of Judas and Pope Joan (cf. *supra*, p. 125, n. 2).

At length D'Ailli summed up the decision of the Council. Hus must publicly recant and abjure. 'I am prepared,' answered Hus, 'to obey the Council, and to be taught; but I beseech you in the name of God, do not lay snares of damnation for me by compelling me to tell a lie, and abjure articles I never held.' As he spoke of his conscience, many mocked. 'Did your conscience,' they cried, 'ever teach you that you had erred?' 'A fat priest, sitting in the window in a splendid garment, called out that he

ought not to be allowed to abjure. If he retract he will not mean it.' But Sigismund pleaded with Hus, and asked wherein lay his difficulty in retracting errors that on his own showing he was unwilling to hold. 'That, my lord king,' answered Hus, 'is not what they mean by abjuring.' After a further warning from Sigismund, 'I stand,' replied Hus, 'at the judgment seat of God, who will judge us all according to our merits.'

As he was led back 'in chains' to prison, Chlum managed to grasp his hand, 'though now rejected by all,' a matter which gave Hus much comfort (see p. 221). Sigismund on his part addressed the assembly: 'One only of the charges proved against Hus would suffice for his condemnation. If, therefore, he be unwilling to adjure and preach against his errors, let him be burnt, or do with him according to your laws. . . . Wherever his disciples be found, let the bishops tear them up root and branch. Make an end therefore of his secret disciples. I have to go away soon, so begin with that fellow what's his name?' 'Jerome,' they shouted. 'Yes, Jerome. I was a boy when this sect first started in Bohemia. See what it has grown into now' (*Doc.* 308-15).

This speech, duly reported by the listening Chlum and Mladenovic, cost Sigismund years of warfare and the crown of Bohemia. This hounding on of the Council to the breach of his own safe-conduct was never forgiven.

The same night Hus wrote as follows to his friends in Constance. He realised clearly now that there was but one issue. A second letter, also without date, was written while the memory of Chlum's warm grasp of the hand was still fresh.

#### LVIII. TO HIS FRIENDS IN CONSTANCE

(Without date : June 8, 1415)

I am very glad that the *Occultus* is hidden!<sup>1</sup> I have had more good food during these days than all the time from Easter to last Sunday.<sup>2</sup> I thought there would be more order and dignity in the Council.<sup>3</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> *Occultus est occultus*. The treatise *Contra Occultum Adversarium*, written February 10, 1412 (see *Mon.* i. 135 ff.). The dangerous point in this lay in its tenet that the King ought to punish bad priests.

<sup>2</sup> While at Gottlieben.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 216, 263.

blessing for ever on my Lord John! Would that I knew how Barbatus<sup>1</sup> is faring; he would not take the advice of his friends. They have my book,<sup>2</sup> so I am in no need at the present of that paper. Keep a copy of the first articles with my proofs attached<sup>3</sup> for the sake of proving any of them, should there be need; attest them with your signature where I have put a cross,<sup>4</sup> especially this article: "Whatever a virtuous man doth, he doth virtuously."<sup>5</sup>

At this moment I am racked with toothache, and I suffered agonies in my cell with vomiting, hemorrhage, headache, and stone. These are the penalties I pay for my sins, and the tokens of God's love to me.

Since they have only condemned the treatises,<sup>6</sup> please qualify my last Czech letter which I sent off to-day,<sup>7</sup> that God's people may not suppose that all my books have been condemned, as I imagined when I wrote my letter of yesterday. I would like to be assured that no letter written in prison shall be made public to any one, because it is not yet finally settled what God will do with me! I am afraid that a letter of mine hath been forwarded by the hands of Ulrich.<sup>8</sup> For God's sake I beg you to look well after the letters and also your words and doings.

<sup>1</sup> So Palacký (*Doc.* 108): cf. p. 199, *n.* 1. But MS. Mladenowic has 'barbatus Hieronymus'—*i.e.*, "bearded Jerome"; and to this the next clause leads me to incline (cf. also pp. 182, *n.* 1, and 233); Jerome's beard was a constant source of trouble to him and made him a marked man.

<sup>2</sup> MS. of the *De Ecclesia*.

<sup>3</sup> Still extant, preserved by Mladenowic (see *Doc.* 204 ff.).

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*                   <sup>5</sup> See *Doc.* p. 214.

<sup>6</sup> *De Ecclesia* and the *Treatises against Palecz and Stanislaus*.

<sup>7</sup> This letter seems to be lost.

<sup>8</sup> Ulrich, of whom we know nothing, had done Hus a good turn on June 5 by informing Mladenowic of the design to hurry the trial (p. 207).



What a comfort your letters and my own have been to me! I trust by God's grace they will be used for men's good. So long as I know that you and the nobles are in Constance, I am comforted even supposing that I am now to be led forth to death. I verily think that God sent you as angels to cheer me in my weakness and misery in the midst of my sore trials; how great they have been, are, and are yet to be, God omnipotent knoweth Who is my mercy and refuge, *my helper and my deliverer: in Him have I trusted.*<sup>1</sup>

I was asked to-day by two persons who were sent to the prison, whether I had any more books of my own composition. I said, "Yes." They replied, "Where?" I said, "In Bohemia." They then inquired whether I had them here. My answer was, "No, not one, although I brought a Bible and other things in addition to the *Sentences.*"<sup>2</sup> And now I have heard that my clerk John has left.<sup>3</sup> They said, "Have you no other conclusions to offer?" I replied, "No," which is true. "Do you wish to abjure and recant?" said they. "Come to the Council," was my reply; "you will hear me there, as I have to stand before it and make my reply to it. Why do you trouble me? Have you come to cheer the prisoner or disturb him?" Whereupon after some further speech they withdrew.

Look after the books. I do not know if you have them. Tell Master Jesenicz that the notary has

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xvii. 4; inexact.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, the great mediæval text-book of theology (see also p. 140, n. 2).

<sup>3</sup> Nothing is known of this 'clericus Joannes,' who, I imagine, had slipped back to Prague.

unfairly altered my deposition as to the gloss of the edict, as indeed you heard; for I stated this publicly in the Council.<sup>1</sup>

## LIX. TO THE SAME

(Without date : June 9 or 10, 1415<sup>2</sup>)

*I love the counsel of the Lord more than gold and topazes;*<sup>3</sup> therefore I hope by the mercy of Jesus Christ that He will grant me His Spirit, to the end that I may stand firm in the truth; *for the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*<sup>4</sup> The Lord Almighty be the eternal reward of my nobles, who steadfastly, stoutly, and faithfully stand on the side of justice. God will grant them to understand aright the truth in the kingdom of Bohemia. But to pursue the truth they must return to Bohemia laying aside all vainglory to follow a King that cannot die, a Man of sorrows but yet a King of glory Who hath the gift of eternal life.

How delightful it was to shake hands with Lord John, who was not ashamed to hold out his hand to a poor abject heretic, a prisoner in irons and the butt of all men's tongues. I shall not perchance have much further speech with you. So greet all the faithful Bohemians when you see them. Palecz came to see me in prison when I was very ill. The

<sup>1</sup> At the trial of June 8 Hus was questioned as to a gloss upon the bull of February 2, 1413—the Lateran Council decree for the burning of the books of Wyclif. Hus stated that he had never seen it until it was shown him when in the Dominican prison. On being further questioned he confessed that he had heard that Jesenicz had written the gloss (*Doc.* 311). Jesenicz was now in Prague (*supra*, p. 206, n. 3).

<sup>2</sup> I judge the date from Chlum's hand-shake; see *infra* and p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxviii, 127, Vulg.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 41.

greeting he gave me before the Commissioners<sup>1</sup> was this: "Since the birth of Christ, there hath not arisen a more dangerous heretic than yourself, excepting Wyclif." He went on to say, "Every one that hath heard you preach is infected with this heresy of yours that the substance of the material bread remains in the sacrament of the altar." "Oh! master," said I, "what a dreadful greeting this is, and what a dreadful sin you are guilty of! I shall die or be burnt, if perchance I rise from my sick bed. What reward then will be given you in Bohemia?" and so on. Perhaps I ought not to have written this; it may look as if I hated him sorely. These words are ever in my heart: *Put not your trust in princes*, etc.;<sup>2</sup> and again: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm*.<sup>3</sup> For God's sake be careful while you are here and when you return. Carry no letters. Forward books by friends sparingly.

You ought to know for a fact that I have had a struggle not to disclose my dreams;<sup>4</sup> for I dreamt of the Pope's flight before it took place; and after telling Lord John, he said that very night, "You will see him again." I dreamt too of Master Jerome's imprisonment, though not in its actual form; of my own imprisonments also, where I should be taken and how they were disclosed, although not in their actual form. I have often had apparitions of hosts of serpents with heads at their tails, but not one was able to bite me; and many other visions. I am telling you of these, not because I suppose myself

<sup>1</sup> P. 174.<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxlv. 2, Vulg.<sup>3</sup> Jer. xvii. 5<sup>4</sup> Cf. pp. 191-3. Chlum evidently was sceptical as to these dreams. Cf. his answer, p. 192 (second sentence).



to be a prophet and am puffed up, but to show you that I suffered temptation both of body and mind and what I have been most afraid of, to wit, that I might transgress the command of Jesus Christ. The words of Master Jerome came to my mind: "If I come to the Council, methinks I shall never return." Andrew the Pole, a worthy tailor, said to me also when bidding me farewell:<sup>1</sup> "God be with you; I think you will not come back." Beloved in God, faithful and loyal knight, my Lord John [*Chlum*], the King of heaven—not of Hungary—grant you an everlasting reward for your loyalty and the toils you undertake on my behalf!

From June 8 until the final scene Hus remained in prison at the Franciscan convent. As his letters show, every day he expected that it would prove to be his last. He little anticipated the four weeks' respite, if such a name may be attached to the prolongation of his trials, cooped up in a narrow cell amid the sweltering heat of a June that drove Sigismund and others to seek a cooler retreat in the fields. This month's grace was not as a rule granted to the victims of the Inquisition, unless indeed they were condemned to linger out the remnant of their days in some lonely cell. But Sigismund and the Council were both anxious to obtain a professed penitent, whom they could send back to Bohemia reduced by his recantation to powerlessness. To obtain this end they exhausted, as the *Letters of Hus* show us, the resources of casuistry. Learned doctors and others plied him with all manner of ingenious illustrations, while great 'Fathers' of the Council went out of their way to offer him convenient 'baskets' (p. 240), in which, as Paul, he might be 'let down' over the wall. But to all their blandishments Hus stood firm.

The student should understand clearly, what Sigismund had shown that he for one did not see (p. 218), the real point at

<sup>1</sup> In Czech from this point to the end. In *Mon.* i. 68, Neander, and others, the passage is mistranslated by taking the "Lord John" to be Hus, thus ascribing the whole of this beautiful sentence to the tailor Andrew!

issue between Hus and the Council, the ground on which he was executed. Hus was a martyr not so much to his convictions of the untruth of current beliefs, as because of his fidelity to conscience. As regards his heresies, he was, as he repeatedly told the Council, willing to abjure. Without the individuality of Wyclif, he was also without Wyclif's clear conception of the value of the individual judgment. He expressly yielded himself, not once nor twice only, to the teaching of the Church. But he could not acknowledge that he recanted heresies which he had always stoutly disclaimed, and which the Council had attributed to him along with doctrines to which he confessed. 'Serene Prince,' said Hus to Sigismund, 'I do not want to cling to any error, and I am perfectly willing to submit to the determination of the Council. But I may not offend God and my conscience by saying that I hold heresies that I have never held.' For Hus truth was supreme: 'I have said that I would not for a chapel full of gold recede from the truth.' 'I know,' he had written in 1412, 'that the truth stands and is mighty for ever, and abides eternally, with whom there is no respect of persons.' Throughout his letters his chief anxiety is 'lest liars should say that I have slipped back from the truth I preached.' Few scenes in history are more touching or ennobling than the fidelity with which Hus refused to swerve from absolute truth even to save his life. He realised that it was better that he should burn than confess that he had ever held doctrines which his soul abhorred, as, for instance, the monstrous article alleged against him by a nameless doctor 'that he had stated that he was the fourth person in the Trinity!' (*Doc.* 318). To Sigismund and worldlings of that ilk recantation of such a charge seemed a bagatelle; the falser the charge the easier to recant. But Hus thought otherwise. To Sigismund the breach of a safe-conduct was a mere matter of expediency; to Hus a falsehood, however great its purchasing power, was a strain upon the soul that no mere "authority" could either sanction or pardon (p. 89).

Hus "followed the gleam" to the end, not counting the cost. It is this emphasis by Hus of the great modern idea that the foundations of truth lie, not so much in unreasoning authority, as in the appeal which it makes to man's consciousness and conscience—the two are often one—that gives to the last letters of Hus their undying value, and marks at the same time the

rise of a new age. As Bishop Creighton well points out: "A new spirit had arisen in Christendom when a man felt that his life and character had been so definitely built up round opinions which the Church condemned, that it was easier for him to die than to resign the truths which made him what he was."<sup>1</sup> But of the truth of our estimate of the value and importance of these last letters the reader can judge for himself.

The letters of this last month for the most part are without date, nor are we anxious to date them. They are letters that deal with the great eternal principles and struggles of the soul. With these the time element has little concern.

The following letter is dated by Palacký as written before the trial. The whole tone of the letter, especially clause two, leads us to attribute it to the three weeks between the trial and the final scene, when Hus was visited by deputation after deputation anxious to overcome what they deemed the scruples of an over-nice conscience. Luther's comment to this epistle prefixed in the *Epistolæ Piissimæ* is most just: 'Hus fights another battle between the flesh and the spirit over the confession of truth, a fight worthy of the knowledge of pious men.'

## LX. TO HIS FRIENDS STAYING ON IN CONSTANCE

(Without date: after June 8, 1415)

I still urge you for God's sake not to let any one get a look at my letters, nor let them be made public, because I am afraid of the risk to individuals. Be careful both in word and in action. Veit, if he is to remain here, ought to be very careful.<sup>2</sup> I have, further, rejoiced greatly at the news that my gracious lord hath arrived.<sup>3</sup> Our Saviour restored Lazarus to life after he had lain four days in the grave. He preserved Jonah for three days in the fish, and sent him forth again to his preaching. He

<sup>1</sup> *Papacy* (new ed.) ii. 46.

<sup>2</sup> He fell later on under suspicion. See p. 270.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly Chlum, to whom there is no letter since June 6.



rescued Daniel from the lions' den to write his prophecies. He saved the three children from the flames in the fiery furnace. He delivered Susannah when already sentenced and going forth to death.<sup>1</sup> Would He not therefore be able likewise to liberate me, poor John Hus, from prison and from death if it should be for His glory, the welfare of the faithful, and my greater good? His power is not shortened, Who by the angel released Peter from prison, when the chains fell off from his hands on the eve of his being brought forth to death in Jerusalem. His will ever be done! I pray that it may be fulfilled in me for His glory and for my sins.

One of the doctors said to me that, whatever I did, I should submit to the Council, though my whole case was good and in order, and added, "If the Council told you, 'You have only one eye,' although you have two, you ought to agree with the Council that it is so." To which I replied, "If the whole world told me so, as long as I have the use of my reason, I could not say so without resisting my conscience." But after some further talk he withdrew his remark, and said, "You are right; I did not give you a very good illustration."

The Lord is with me as a mighty warrior. "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" At these times I often sing to Him the response, *Lord, I suffer violence; answer Thou for me.*<sup>2</sup> I know not what I shall say to my enemies. The Lord be with you.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 197, 226.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxviii. 14.

## LXI. TO HENRY SKOPEK DE DUBA

*(Without date : June 9, 1415<sup>1</sup>)*

To the generous Lord Henry of Duba, my faithful and beloved lord. I commend you, my dear lord, to God. Fear Him as the Lord Almighty, love Him as the Father most holy, ever aim at Him in mind, works, and desire. For His sake carefully abstain from sin, do all the good you can, and be not afraid of the adversities of this world. For He is a Master that surely rewardeth wrongdoing, Who will not cause His faithful servant to be in need, will not weary him nor spoil him; but the more he serves, the more will He enrich him, strengthen him, and make him a better man. He cannot forsake His servant, nor will He leave Him outside; for He said, "*Where I am, there will My servant be also.*"<sup>2</sup> He doth not dismiss a faithful servant even if He requires him not, nor can his goods and sustenance be cut off. He hath served His servant before His servant served Him, seeing that for His servant's sake He suffered a shameful and cruel death after enduring insults, shame, buffeting, scourging, and spitting. Oh, how wretched is that servant who doth not dare for such a Master to risk his good name and possessions, or even to suffer shame! He knoweth not that he will most surely lose what he so miserably desires to keep, and a greater good withal; for in this life he will keep men's goodwill, paltry, slight, and fickle,

<sup>1</sup> See next letter, with which it seems to have been enclosed. But part was written before (see p. 229). For Henry Skopek, see p. 169, n. 2. In the MS. a note, perhaps by Mladenowic, has been added that the enclosed song is composed in "dimeter trochaics, of which every two lines in succession rhyme with one another in the two last syllables." The whole letter and song is in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> John xiv. 3.

but when he departs this life he will incur the hatred of all, both men and devils and angels, and thus, by reason of his poor-spirited service, he will lose eternal joy and grace.

At life's end we shall know  
 What account we must show :  
 Holding cheap the All-wise,  
 'Tis the flesh we most prize ;  
 Lip-worship's enough,  
 While our body we stuff!  
 We pursue joys above  
 Like a cat that's in love  
 With fish, but to fish  
 By no means doth wish !  
 There's one like a cat  
 Whom you may guess at,  
 Foul and greedy and slow,  
 False and crafty and low ;  
 With pride too he's puffed :  
 But of this quite enough !  
 With such do not stand,  
 Or in judgment you'll land.  
 I leave you, friend Duba,  
 My horse-cloth and bag.<sup>1</sup>  
 Remember me, please,  
 Whene'er you eat cheese.  
 May God be your crown  
 For all you have done.  
 May Hus have a part  
 In the grace of your heart !  
 May you die in the Lord,  
 A true saint adored !

Amen.

<sup>1</sup> *Manticam cum ephippio.*



## LXII. TO A FRIEND

(June 9, 1415)

[Forward this letter on parchment to Lord Henry Skopek, because it was in memory of him that I kept it by me in prison, and composed those verses in my leisure moments.]

Lord Henry,<sup>1</sup> faithful friend in God, remember the good you have learnt from me and observe it, that you may presently attain to the heavenly joy. Remember that I said, "I hope God will send further trials to me." I am writing the letters on the Sunday before the Feast of St. Vitus, in expectation of death.

The following letter is of great interest historically, as throwing light upon the way in which Hus himself regarded the matter of the safe-conduct. But his reflections after the event are not altogether fair to Sigismund's intentions, and the statement concerning Lord Mikess Diwocky is hard to understand.

## LXIII. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(Without date: shortly after June 8, 1415)

I am very pleased about Peter.<sup>2</sup> I do not keep his letters, but destroy them at once. Big sheets<sup>3</sup> should not be sent to me, for I am afraid of the risk to the messenger and other persons. I beg you for God's sake to get all the nobles to petition Sigismund in a body for a final hearing, because he was the only one in the Council to say that at the next hearing I should be allowed to reply briefly in writing. His

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the letter is in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> Mladenowic.

<sup>3</sup> *Sexterni* = codices sex foliorum.

confusion will be great if that promise is unfulfilled.<sup>1</sup> But methinks his word is as little to be trusted as in the matter of the safe-conduct. They told me in Bohemia to beware of that safe-conduct. Others said, "He will hand you over to your enemies." Lord Mikess Diwoky<sup>2</sup> remarked to me in the presence of Master Jesenicz, "Master, you may take it for certain that you will be condemned." I imagine he knew the King's intentions. I thought that God's law and truth would be his wisdom, only I fancy he has not much wisdom. He passed judgment upon me before my enemies did. If he had only held to the method of the Gentile Pilate who, on hearing the charges, said, "*I find no fault in this man,*"<sup>3</sup> or, at least, if he had said, "I gave him a safe-conduct; if he doth not wish to abide by the decision of the Council, I will send him back to the King of Bohemia with your verdict and findings, in order that his Majesty, along with his clergy, may pass judgment on him"! Indeed, he sent word to me by Lord Henry Lefl<sup>4</sup> and others that he desired to arrange a satisfactory hearing for me, and if I did not accept the judgment he would send me back again in safety.

#### LXIV. TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF BOHEMIA<sup>5</sup>

(June 10, 1415)

Master John Hus, a servant of God in hope, to all the faithful Bohemians who love and will love God, praying that God may grant them to live and die

<sup>1</sup> For this promise of Sigismund, see *Doc.* 308.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 145, with which this statement seems a little contradictory, especially for one who was Sigismund's own agent.

<sup>3</sup> John xix. 4.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> The whole letter is in Czech.

in His grace and dwell for ever in the heavenly joy.  
Amen.

Faithful and beloved of God, lords and ladies, rich and poor! I entreat you and exhort you to love God, to spread abroad His word, and to hear and observe it more willingly. I entreat you to hold fast the truth of God, which I have written and preached to you from the Holy Scriptures and the utterances of His saints. I entreat you also, if any have heard in my preaching or private conversation that which is opposed to God's truth, or if I have ever written anything of that kind—I trust God that it is not so—not to hold to it. I entreat you, if any have noticed frivolity in my words or actions, not to imitate it, but to pray God that it may please Him to pardon me.<sup>1</sup> I entreat you to love and commend and cultivate priests of good life—especially those that are earnest students of Holy Writ. I entreat you to beware of deceitful men, and particularly of wicked priests, of whom the Saviour saith that *they are in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.*<sup>2</sup> I entreat you to be kind to the poor and to rule them justly. I entreat all citizens to be righteous in their business dealings. I entreat all artisans faithfully to follow their craft and take delight in it. I entreat all servants to be faithful servants of their masters and mistresses. I entreat masters to live a good life and faithfully to instruct their scholars, especially that they may love God and learn to give themselves to knowledge, in order to promote His honour, the welfare of the state, and their own salvation, but not for the sake of avarice or the praise of man. I entreat students of letters and other scholars to obey their masters in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vii. 15.



things good, to imitate them, and diligently apply themselves to letters for the sake of God's honour and their own salvation and that of other men. I entreat all the people to give thanks to Baron Wenzel of Duba, otherwise of Leštna, Baron John of Chlum, Lord Henry of Plumlow,<sup>1</sup> Lord William Zajiic,<sup>2</sup> Lord Myssa,<sup>3</sup> and the other nobles in Bohemia and Moravia, and the faithful nobles of the kingdom of Poland, and ever gratefully to remember their zeal in having often resisted, as God's brave defenders and helpers of His truth, the whole of the Council, telling them what they ought to do, and making replies with a view to my liberty, more especially Baron Wenzel of Duba and Baron John of Chlum. Give credence to them, whatever their account of the proceedings shall be; for they were present at the Council when I pleaded my cause, for several days. They know which of the Bohemians trumped up disgraceful charges against me, and how many those charges were, how the whole Council shouted against me, and how I replied to the questions which were put to me. I entreat you also to make supplication on behalf of his Majesty the King of Rome and Bohemia, of your Queen<sup>4</sup> and nobles, that the God of love may abide with them in grace, both now and hereafter in eternal joy.

I write this letter to you in prison, bound with chains and expecting on the morrow the sentence of death, yet fully trusting in God that I shall not swerve from His truth nor swear denial of the errors, whereof I have been charged by false witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> P. 189.

<sup>2</sup> P. 200, *n.* 3.

<sup>3</sup> P. 200, *n.* 4.

<sup>4</sup> Wenzel and Sophia. Wenzel had refused to own his deposition as "King of Rome" (see p. 18).

What grace God hath shown me, and how He helps me in the midst of strange temptations, you will know when by His mercy we meet in joy in His presence. Of Master Jerome, my beloved friend, I hear nothing<sup>1</sup> except that he too, like myself, is in a noisome prison waiting for death, and that on account of his faith which he showed so earnestly to the Bohemians. The Bohemians are our fiercest enemies,<sup>2</sup> and have put us under the power and custody of other adversaries: pray for them, I beseech you. Also I entreat you, especially people of Prague, to support the chapel at Bethlehem, so far as God shall permit His holy word to be preached there. It is on account of that chapel that the devil hath blazed forth with anger, and it is against it that he hath aroused parish priests and cathedral clergy; in truth he felt that his kingdom was being overthrown in that place. I trust that God will preserve that chapel as long as it is His pleasure,<sup>3</sup> and cause greater good to be done there by others than by me, His unprofitable servant. I entreat this too of you, that ye love one another, defend good men from violent oppression, and give every one an opportunity of hearing the truth. I am writing this with the help of a good angel<sup>4</sup> on Monday night before St. Vitus's Day.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. note on 'barbatus' on p. 219, *n.* 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 147, 165.

<sup>3</sup> Destroyed by the Jesuits in 1786. See also p. 79, *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, whoever at the Franciscan acted the part of gaoler Robert.

<sup>5</sup> The great Cathedral of Prague was dedicated to St. Vitus; hence the point. St. Veit's Day was June 15, which that year fell on a Saturday. Vitus, with his nurse Crescentia and her husband Modestus, was one of the Sicilian martyrs under Diocletian. The cult was widespread. His arm was brought from Corbey to Prague at an early date, while Charles IV. in January 1356 secured the head from Pavia. At this town, next to Bohemia, lay the centre of his cult. (See *Acta SS.*, June xv. 491-519; Pertz, *Mon. Germ.* ii. 576-85.)

LXV. TO HENRY SKOPEK DE DUBA<sup>1</sup>

(June 13, 1413)

God be with you, my dear lord! Your notes reached me on Wednesday before St. Vitus's Day.<sup>2</sup> I looked at them with a happy heart, although in prison, bound with chains and expecting my death-sentence. I entreat you, dear lord, live as the law of God commands and observe what you have heard from my lips: if there hath been aught of wrong therein, spurn it. Nevertheless I trust, by the Saviour's mercy, you have learnt nothing from me that hath been contrary to His holy will. I cannot write at length; but in a few words I counsel you to keep in your heart God's counsels, to be kind to the poor, to abstain from pride, to lead a chaste life, and to remember these words: "What thou art, what thou wert, what thou wilt be, ever ponder: ponder too the matter, the place, the subject, the 'why,' the 'how,' the 'when' of thy words."<sup>3</sup> Dear lord, remember me, and give my greeting to your wife and family and all my friends; for you will never methinks look upon my face again, as I am every moment expecting the sentence of death. Sent off on Thursday before St. Vitus's Day. God be with you, dear Bohemians, and with me a sinner; it is for His holy law that I suffer.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is in Czech. Cf. Letters LXI. and LXII. to the same.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, June 12.

<sup>3</sup> See also next letter, p. 237. I do not know the source of this quotation.



LXVI. TO MASTER MARTIN, HIS DISCIPLE<sup>1</sup>

(June 16, 1415)

Master Martin, my dear disciple and brother in Christ! Live according to Christ's gospel and put on diligence that you may preach the word of God. I beg you, for God's sake, love not a fine garment. Alas! I loved and wore one, thus giving no example of humility to the people I preached to. Delight to read the Bible, and especially the New Testament; and where you do not understand, refer at once to the commentators when you have them at hand. Beware of talking with women, and especially be careful in hearing their confessions, lest you be caught in the snare of wantonness; for I trust you have been preserved a chaste virgin<sup>2</sup> unto God. Do not be afraid to die for Christ, if you would live with Christ. For He Himself saith: *Fear ye not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul.*<sup>3</sup> If they shall charge you with complicity in my heresy,<sup>4</sup> say, "I hope my master was a good Christian; but as to what he wrote and taught by way of protest in the schools, I did not understand it all, nor did I read it through." I think you will find things are as I say; but I hope by the mercy of God and by the help of good men that they will let you depart in peace, though Palecz and his party are striving to get a summons against all my adherents.<sup>5</sup> Be assured that the Lord still lives, Who will be able to keep you all steadfast in His grace and to put to death and destroy in hell the enemies of the truth.

<sup>1</sup> With this letter compare No. XXXV.<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rev. xiv. 4.<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 28.<sup>4</sup> *De adhesione.*<sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 222.

I commend my brethren to you; treat them as you know how, dear friend. I trust you will give my greetings to the holy Petra with Duora and her family, and to all the friends belonging to the Bethlehem, Katherine called Hus, a holy virgin, I hope, Girzik<sup>1</sup> the rector, the lady of Zderaz, Michael of Prachaticz, Maurice Kačer, and all the friends of the truth, Ješkonissa, Gregory, and all the masters, Jesenicz, Kuba, the two Simons, Nicholas and Hawlik.<sup>2</sup> Whoever hath the books, or is to have them, must be careful with them. Greet the doctors my beloved brethren in Christ, the shoemakers, the tailors, and the book-writers also, asking them to be zealous for Christ's gospel and to be 'lowly wise' and not to use their own glosses, but those of the doctors of the Church. Ask without fail Lord Henry Left to give a guinea to James, the book-writer, as he promised to him. Greet Matthew, once a member at the Bethlehem, and Matthew Chudy, especially that he may pray for me a sinner, and the faithful John Vitlin. If you think proper, apprentice the sons of my brother to a craft, for I fear they would not guard an ecclesiastical calling as they ought, should they take to it. Make such repayment as you can to my creditors, who have my bond. Should they wish to let me off for God's sake and out of love to me, God will give them the more. Hold fast whatever good you learnt from me. If you saw anything unseemly in me, cast it from you and pray

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 151, 206. One of the "Simons" would be Simon Tissnow.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 274, where they are again associated together. Nicholas I take to be Nicholas Miliczin (see p. 80). Hawlik or Gallus was at this time the preacher at the Bethlehem. Cf. pp. 248, 275. Michael of Prachaticz was a public notary (cf. *Doc.* 331 and *passim*).

God that it may please Him to spare me. "Ponder always what you are, what you were, what you will be" (*supra*, p. 234.) Mourn the past, mend the present, beware of the future—I am speaking of sins. May the God of all grace strengthen you in His grace with all the brethren named above and the others likewise, and may He bring you to glory, in which, I trust, we shall all rejoice together by His mercy, before thirty years have passed away. Farewell evermore, my dear brother in Christ Jesus, with all who love the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written in prison on Sunday after the Feast of St. Vitus.

The two following letters of Hus introduce us to a most interesting episode in these last dark days, and show us some of the influences brought to bear upon the Reformer to induce him to be false to himself, and to recant. Every artifice of casuistry was employed to bring out this result; and leaders of the Council added their persuasions. Among these leaders was one whose name we do not know, but whom Hus here calls the "Father." Of his kindly feelings towards the Reformer Hus has already told us; he was the only one in all the Council upon whose sympathies Hus could count (p. 208). In the following letter the "Father" tried to persuade Hus to yield to the Council's demands. The letter is without date, and is anonymous, though several copies of it have been preserved for us. Unfortunately not even Mladenowic has added in the margin the name of the writer. Luther in the *Epist. Piissimæ* identified "Pater" with John Cardinalis, whom he mistakenly took to be John de Bronhiaco (p. 216 n.), Cardinal of Ostia, the president of the Council. That this cannot be "Pater" seems to me clear from the first sentence of his letter on p. 240. If we are to look among the cardinals I should incline to Zabarella, who at the Council on June 8 had promised Hus that he would send 'a form of abjuration sufficiently guarded' (*Doc.* 309). The legal reference in the last clause of his second letter is suitable to one who was the pre-eminent canonist of



the Council; while his rank would account for his desire to be anonymous. But any identification is at the best a mere guess, and Zabarella's after conduct does not lend weight to the surmise.

The "Father's" first letter took the shape of a form of recantation, which Hus was to fill up and sign. Hus in his reply points out his real difficulty. Though not very clearly put, there is no note of faltering.

#### THE "FATHER" TO MASTER JOHN HUS

*(Without date: middle of June 1415)*

A form suggested by the "Father" to John Hus for giving in his submission to the decision of the Council, abjuring and recanting.

I being so and so, etc. Over and above the declarations made by me, which I desire to be understood as repeated, I declare anew that although much is laid to my charge which never entered my mind; none the less in the matter of all the charges brought forward, whether raised against myself or extracted from my books or even the depositions of witnesses, I hereby submit myself humbly to the merciful appointment, decision, and correction of the most holy General Council, to abjure, to revoke, to recant, to undergo merciful penance, and to do all things and several that the said most holy Council in its mercy and grace shall deem fit to ordain for my salvation, commending myself to the same with the utmost devotion.

#### LXVII. MASTER JOHN HUS TO THE "FATHER"

*(Without date: middle of June)*

May the Father Almighty, most wise and most loving, be pleased to grant to my "Father," highly esteemed for Christ Jesus's sake, the everlasting life of glory.

Reverend Father, I am truly grateful for your pious and fatherly kindness. I dare not submit myself to the Council in the terms you have suggested, because

thereby I should have to condemn many truths which, as I have heard from their own lips, they call "scandalous," and also because I should be guilty of perjury if I abjured and confessed that I have held erroneous views; and thereby I should greatly scandalise God's people who have heard the contrary in my preaching. If then the holy Eleazar, who lived under the old law, and of whom we read in Maccabees,<sup>1</sup> refused to make a lying confession that he had eaten flesh forbidden by the law so as not to act against God's will and to leave an evil example to his descendants, how could I, a priest of the new law, albeit unworthy, for fear of a penalty which will soon be over, be guilty of the more grievous sin of breaking God's law? In the first place, I should err from the truth, in the second I should commit perjury, and thirdly I should be a stumbling-block to my neighbours. Assuredly it is fitting for me rather to die than to flee a momentary penalty to fall into the Lord's hand and afterwards, perchance, into everlasting fire and shame. And because I have appealed to Christ Jesus,<sup>2</sup> the most potent and just of all judges, committing my cause to Him, therefore I stand by His judgment and sentence, knowing that He will judge every man not on false and erroneous evidence but on the true facts and merits of the case.

The "Father" was not satisfied with this reply, or with the appeal with which the letter had concluded. Probably he did not discern the real difficulty of Hus from his reply. At any rate, he would make one more effort. His next letter is a most interesting piece of casuistry and special pleading. The last sentences would seem to indicate sympathy with the life and spirit of Hus. If so, they rule out Zabarella, or for that matter any cardinal.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Macc. vi. 18 ff.

<sup>2</sup> P. 79.

Hus in his reply was uncompromising in his rejection of the 'basket' which the "Father" offered for his escape. With this reply the incident closed, and the "Father" left Hus to his fate. But he was still pestered by others eager to prove their powers of argument, among them, we learn with interest, by an old Augustinian monk, the delegate from Luther's university, Erfurt. 'No theologian,' cried the enthusiastic chronicler, 'was able to overcome Hus in argument save that old father alone.'

THE "FATHER" TO MASTER JOHN HUS

(Without date : middle of June 1415)

In the first place, my most dearly beloved brother, do not be moved by the fact that thou condemnest certain truths; for judgment is not passed by thee, but by those who are thy elders—yea, and our elders<sup>1</sup> at the present time. Take heed to this word: "Lean not on thine own understanding." There are many intellectual<sup>2</sup> and conscientious men in the Council. Listen to the law of thy mother. So much for the first point.

Item, in the second place, as to perjury. If that were perjury, it would not recoil on thee, but on those who compel it.

Item, so far as thou art concerned, there are no heresies if thou cease from obstinacy. Augustine, Origen, the master of the *Sentences*, and others erred, but joyously came back. Several times I have believed that I understood aright some things wherein I was mistaken; when admonished, I came back with gladness.

Item, I write briefly, for I address one that understandeth. Thou wilt not swerve from the truth, but thou wilt draw nigh to it, and so be not worse off, but better. Thou wilt not be a stumbling-block, but a builder up. Eleazar the Jew had glory; the Jewess with her seven sons and the eight martyrs had more glory.<sup>3</sup> None the less Paul was let down in a basket<sup>4</sup> to gain greater blessings. The Lord Jesus, the Judge to whom thou hast appealed, grants thee release from thy appeal<sup>5</sup> in these words: Still greater conflicts shall be given thee for the faith of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Proof that he was not John de Bronhiaco.    <sup>2</sup> *Scientifici*.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Macc. vi. 17-vii.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 33.

<sup>5</sup> *Dat vobis apostolos*. See *apostoli* in Ducange, and note that the word was in use at the time of the Council for an appeal from the Pope to the Council.



## LXVIII. MASTER JOHN HUS TO THE "FATHER"

(Without date : middle of June 1415)

The Council hath often made all these demands of me; but it is for the reason that they involve my recantation, abjuring, and the undergoing of penance, in which case I should have to give up many truths. Secondly, I should be forced to abjure, and so be a perjurer by admitting the errors which have been falsely laid to my charge. Thirdly, I should be a stumbling-block to many of God's people to whom I have preached; for which cause it were fitting *that a millstone were hanged about my neck and I be cast into the depths of the sea.*<sup>1</sup> Fourthly, if I took this course in my wish to escape a brief confusion and punishment, I should fall into the deepest confusion and punishment of all, unless I humbly repented before death. Therefore for my comfort I have bethought me of the seven Maccabean martyrs, who desired rather to be cut into pieces than to eat flesh contrary to the law of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> I recall too the holy Eleazar, who, as it is written, refused only to say that he had eaten flesh forbidden by law, lest he should offer a bad example to posterity, but rather endured martyrdom. How, then, with the holy men and women of the gospel before my eyes, who gave themselves up to martyrdom rather than consent to sin, could I, who have preached on patience and constancy for so many years, be guilty of many falsehoods and of perjury, and so scandalise the children of God? Far be it from me; for Christ the Lord will abundantly reward me, by granting me strength to endure in

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 240, n. 3.

this present life and glory in that which is to come.

The next letter of Hus is remarkable for the boldness with which Hus asserted his position, and the strong sarcasms it contains upon the actions of the Council in their treatment of Pope John. The reader will remember that Hus had attempted a diversion on this matter at his trial (see p. 217), and had been frustrated by Sigismund. Nor does Hus forget to expose the logical inconsistency of Palecz and Stanislaus. From first to last the letter contains no note of doubt or hesitation. Hus has faced the issues and decided. At one time he was willing to leave himself in the hands of the Council. Now he is convinced that the Council is not a trustworthy guide. In other respects the reader will note the growing decision and firmness of tone of his letters as the end draws nigh.

The letter is undated ; nevertheless it contains some evidence of time. The 'last copy of the articles,' to which Hus refers on p. 244, were 'the articles read against the doctrine and person of Hus on June 18 in public congregation,' a copy of which, with Hus's corrections in writing, has been preserved for us by Mladenowic (*Doc.* 225-33). Another mark of time will be found in the reference in the last paragraph to the decree of the Council forbidding the cup. This fatal decree, which deluged Bohemia with blood, was formally passed on June 15, 1415.

#### LXIX. TO HIS FRIENDS IN CONSTANCE

(*Without date : after June 18, 1415*)

Most gracious lords, faithful zealots for the truth, my comforters in the truth, sent of God to my aid like angels ! I cannot write fully of all the gratitude I feel for your constancy and the kindly offices you have shown to me a sinner, yet a servant in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but I pray that Jesus Christ Himself, our loving Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour, may reward you in this present life and grant to you Himself as the best recompense in that

which is to come. Therefore I exhort you by His mercy to give heed to His gospel and especially to His most holy commands. My noble Baron Wenzel [*Duba*], take to yourself a wife,<sup>1</sup> live holy in matrimony, and forsake the vanities of this world. And you, Baron John [*Chlum*], now that you have left the service of earthly kings,<sup>2</sup> abide at home with your wife and children in the service of God; for you see how the wheel of the world's vanity turns, now lifting a man up and anon setting him down, while it gives but a brief solace to the man it lifts up, for thereafter ensues the eternal punishment in fire and darkness.

You know now the manner of life of these spiritual folk, who assert that they are the true and evident vicars of Christ and His apostles, proclaiming themselves the Holy Church and the most Holy Council which cannot err; though indeed they did err when at the first they offered homage on bended knees to John XXIII., kissing his feet, and calling him most holy, when they knew he was 'a shameful homicide, a Sodomite, a simoniac and a heretic,' as indeed they afterwards phrased it in their condemnation of him.<sup>3</sup> Now they have cut off the Church's head, they have torn out the Church's heart, they have drained the Church's unfailing spring, they have made utterly to fail the all-sufficient unfailing refuge of the Church to

<sup>1</sup> See p. 272, where we find that by June 29 Wenzel Duba had determined on marriage. This is another factor in settling the date as after June 15.

<sup>2</sup> Chlum, it would appear, had left Sigismund's court, though the Latin might be construed as an exhortation to leave (cf. *infra*, p. 269).

<sup>3</sup> Hus is quoting the words of the condemnation; see Hardt, iv. 196-208, 228-55. For the value of these charges see my *Age of Hus*, App. C. John was deposed on May 29,



which every Christian should flee. What becomes then of the opinion of Master Stanislaus of happy memory (God be merciful to him), of Palecz, and his fellow doctors, who laid down<sup>1</sup> through Stanislaus that the Pope is the head of the Church, its all-sufficient ruler, its life-giving heart, its unfailling spring overflowing with authority, the channel by which all power descends to subordinates, the unfailling refuge which meets the needs of every Christian and to which every Christian should flee? Even now, believing Christendom exists without a Pope, that paragon of virtue! seeing that it has Christ Jesus as its Head to direct it best of all, Christ Jesus as its Heart to give life to it, the life of grace, Christ Jesus as its Fount, watering it with the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit, Christ Jesus as its Channel, wherein flows all the rivers of His graces, Christ Jesus as its all-satisfying and unfailling Refuge, to which in my misery I run back with the steadfast hope that He will not fail me in direction, in renewal, and succour, but will deliver me from my sins and this present evil world and reward me with unending joy.

Moreover, the Council has erred three times or more by making wrong extracts from my books, by rejecting some of the articles whose meaning they have wrested and confused, and finally by curtailing some of them in the last copy of the articles, as will be clear to all who see the books and articles in question.<sup>2</sup> Therefore I plainly conclude along with yourselves, that not everything that the Council doth, saith, or pronounces is approved of Christ, the truthful Judge. Blessed then are those who keep the gospel, and recognise, flee, and reject the pomp,

<sup>1</sup> March 1413; see *Doc.* 507 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See *Doc.* 225-33.

the avarice, the hypocrisy and the craft of Antichrist and his ministers, while they look with patience for the coming of the righteous Judge.

I beseech you by the tender mercies of Jesus Christ to flee all evil-living priests, but to love those that are good according to their works; and as much as lieth in you, together with all the faithful, suffer not the barons and lords to oppress them: it was for this that God did set you over others. I imagine there will arise a great persecution in Bohemia against those who faithfully serve God, unless God lay bare His arm through the secular lords whom He hath enlightened by His gospel more fully than the lords spiritual. What madness to condemn as error the gospel of Christ and that epistle of Paul which he saith he *received not of man but of Christ*,<sup>1</sup> aye, and to condemn the very act of Christ with the acts of His holy apostles and the other saints! I mean the communion of the sacrament of the cup<sup>2</sup> of our Lord, instituted for all adult<sup>3</sup> believers. They actually call it an error that believing laymen should be permitted to drink of the Lord's cup, and if any priest should give them the cup to drink, he is, forsooth, to be dubbed erroneous; and if he doth not cease the practice, he must be condemned as a heretic!<sup>4</sup> St. Paul thus saith to all believers: *As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of our Lord until He*

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 169, 177, 248.

<sup>3</sup> This word should be noted. The later Hussites in their enthusiasm for the Eucharist fell back upon the custom of infantile communion, and their demand in this matter formed one of the difficulties of the Council of Basel.

<sup>4</sup> See the Council's decree (June 15, 1415) in Hardt, iv. 334.

*come*<sup>1</sup>—that is, until the Judgment Day, when He will come; and lo! it is now said that the custom of the Roman Church is the very opposite of this!

In the following letter Hus defines more clearly than he had done for the "Father" his real difficulty in accepting the Council's 'basket' of escape. The end of the letter shows the peace of soul in which Hus was now living. On the same day he wrote a letter to Hawlik, the priest of the Bethlehem, in which he defined very clearly his views as to the decree of the Council withholding the cup. Hawlik, it would seem, was one of those to whom Chlum had referred, who had been disturbed by the matter (p. 169), and had not hesitated to attack Jakoubek (see p. 177).

#### LXX. TO HIS FRIENDS IN CONSTANCE

(June 21, 1415)

This is my final intention in the name of Jesus Christ: I refuse to confess that the articles which have been extracted in their proper sense are erroneous, and I refuse to abjure those which have been laid to my charge by false witnesses, because to abjure them is to confess that I held an error or errors; nor will I depart from them and hold the opposite. For God knows I never preached those errors, which they have concocted by withdrawing many truths and introducing falsehoods. If I were convinced that any of my articles were contrary to the truth, I would most gladly amend and revoke them, and teach and preach the opposite; but I think there is none of them contrary to the gospel of Christ and the teachings of the doctors of the Church, although called 'scandalous' and 'erroneous' by those they displease. Therefore, whatever false

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.



meaning be contained of my set purpose in any article whatsoever, I abhor it, and submit myself to the correction of my almighty and supreme Master, trusting that of His infinite mercy He will cleanse me from secret sins. I return thanks to all the barons of the kingdom of Bohemia, to knights and retainers, and especially to King Wenzel and to the Queen, for having shown me affection, and having piously entreated me, and for having earnestly striven for my release. I thank Sigismund too for all the kindness he hath shown me.<sup>1</sup> I thank all the Bohemian and Polish lords for having loyally and steadfastly stood out for the truth and my liberty,<sup>2</sup> and I yearn for the salvation of them all, both now in grace and hereafter in glory everlasting. May the God of all grace bring you alive in bodily and spiritual health to Bohemia, that there you may serve Christ as King and attain to the life of glory. Greet all my friends, whose names I cannot write down; for if I should write some names and omit others, I might be deemed a respecter of persons, and those whose names I omitted might suppose I had forgotten them or loved them not as I ought. Written in prison, in chains, on Friday before the feast of St. John Baptist.

JOHN HUS,

in hope a servant of Jesus Christ, from the hope of Whom the devil could never, and will never, separate me, guided as I am by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to know whether to take this as sarcasm or the kindness of forgiveness.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 204. *Do.* 550-55.

LXXI. TO GALLUS (HAWLIK<sup>1</sup>), PREACHER IN THE  
BETHLEHEM

(June 21, 1415)

My beloved brother, Master<sup>2</sup> Gallus, preacher of Christ's word, do not oppose the sacrament of the Lord's cup, which was instituted of Christ both of Himself and through His apostles. For there is no Scripture against it; but only a custom which hath grown up, as I think, through negligence. Only we ought not to follow custom, but the example and truth of Christ. Now<sup>3</sup> the Council, on the plea of custom, hath condemned as an error the communion of the cup so far as the laity are concerned, and he who practises it must be punished as a heretic, unless he come to his senses. What a piece of wickedness, to condemn after all these years Christ's institution as an error! I beg you for God's sake cease your attack on Master Jakoubek,<sup>4</sup> lest there be a schism among the faithful to the delight of the devil. Also, dear friend, prepare to suffer for the eating of the bread and the communion of the cup, and take a brave stand on Christ's truth, laying aside all unlawful fears and comforting the other brethren in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will, I think, give you the arguments for the communion of the cup, which I wrote in Constance.<sup>5</sup> Greet Christ's

<sup>1</sup> See p. 177, and for Hawlik pp. 172, 236, 275.

<sup>2</sup> D. (dominus) which, like the old English "Sir," was applied to priests. Cf. p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> *Jam.* But *jam* and *nunc* are interchangeable in mediæval Latin.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 169, 177.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 170 and *Mon.* i. 42-4.

faithful ones. Written in chains on the eve of the ten thousand soldier-martyrs (*militum*.<sup>1</sup>)

In these last days the thoughts of Hus turned once more to his old friend and comrade in past struggles, Christian Prachaticz. Christian unfortunately, as the reader will remember, had somewhat fallen away. We feel the shadow of this fall cast over this last brief letter of Hus to one who had been at one period his closest correspondent. (See *supra*, p. 196, n. 1.)

## LXXII. TO MASTER CHRISTIAN

(Without date : about June 22, 1415)

Master Christian, my master and particular benefactor, take your stand on Christ's truth and cling to the faithful. Do not be afraid; for the Lord will shortly grant you a defence and increase the number

<sup>1</sup> For the legend of the 'Ten Thousand Martyrs' see *Acta Sanctorum*, June 22, vol. v. 151-62. The authority for this legend originally cited seems to have been Bede's *Martyrologium* (Migne, vol. xciv. p. 954), but this work in its present form owes much to twelfth-century additions. June 22 is the Day of St. Alban and the two thousand British martyrs. I imagine the 'Ten Thousand' was due to continental rivalry. The 'Ten Thousand' were said to have been crucified on Mount Ararat under Marcus Aurelius. Their feast was celebrated at Cracow, Breslau, at Paris in the Church of the Celestines, and especially at Prague, in the treasury of which were many relics of these fabled heroes. Hence the allusion of Hus, for whom relics had a charm (see p. 85). Spanish writers crowned the absurdity by claiming that they were Spaniards.

This tale was one of the earliest to be discredited. Before the end of fourteenth century Ralph de Rivo in his book *De Observatione Canonum* (in Hittorpius, *De div. Cath. Eccles. Officiis*, Paris, 1560, pp. 1103-63) mentions this among the fables to which Rome lent no sanction ('de decem millibus martyrum, quæ fabulosæ—dicam donec aliud videro—finguntur,' *ib.* p. 1121).

I may add that Hus's reading 'militum' if genuine is probably a corruption from 'millia,' and certainly is not found in the usual versions of the tale (*e.g.* Usuard's *Martyrologium*, ed. Louvain, 1568).



of Christ's faithful ones. Be kind to the poor, as you have ever been. You have, I hope, kept your chastity and fled avarice; continue to flee it, and for your own sake do not be a pluralist. Ever hold fast the Church, that the faithful may flock to you as to a kind father. Greet affectionately Master Jakoubek and all friends of the truth. Written in chains, in expectation of being burnt.

Luther's comment on the following beautiful letter will be, we think, the verdict of all its readers. 'Read this,' he wrote, 'and you will rejoice.' In no letter does Hus rise to serener heights of resignation and conviction. The last paragraph is especially beautiful, and in the copy which I have used of the *Epistolæ Piissimæ* they have been underlined by one who, long ago, gained comfort from them.

The Council evidently had not yet given up all hopes of procuring a recantation. Palecz, we note, is somewhat softening towards his old friend, but Michael is as relentless as ever. But the issue had passed from their hands.

### LXXIII. TO HIS FRIENDS AT CONSTANCE

(June 23, 1415)

Dear friends, I must tell you of what Palecz said when urging me not to trouble about the confusion of abjuring, but to consider the good that would come of it. I replied, "It is a greater confusion to be condemned and burnt than to abjure; how, then, can I be afraid of the confusion? But give me your own ideas; how would you act if you knew as a fact that you did not hold the errors ascribed to you? Would you be willing to abjure?" He replied, "It is a difficulty," and began to weep. We discussed many other plans which I objected to. Michael, poor

fellow, was several times at my prison with the deputies. When I was engaged with the deputies he said to the gaolers: "By God's grace we shall soon burn this heretic who has cost me many a florin." Understand that in writing this I do not yearn for vengeance on him; this I have left with God. I am praying for him with all my heart.

Once more I urge you to be careful with the letters. Michael hath arranged that no one is to be allowed in the prison; the gaolers' wives are not allowed admission. O holy God, how widely hath Antichrist extended his cruel power! but I think it will be cut short, and his iniquity further stripped bare among the faithful people. God Almighty will strengthen the hearts of His faithful ones whom He hath chosen before the foundation of the world that they may receive an incorruptible crown. Let Antichrist rage as he will, he shall not prevail against Christ, Who shall slay him with the breath of His mouth,<sup>1</sup> as saith the apostle. And then *the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God*, saith the apostle, adding, *We ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body.*<sup>2</sup>

I am greatly comforted by that saying of our

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luther's famous hymn (trans. Carlyle):—

And let the prince of ill  
Look grim as e'er he will,  
He harms us not a whit.  
For why? his doom is writ.  
A word shall quickly slay him.

and remember that Luther had read this letter.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 21, 23.

Lord: *Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice; for behold your reward is great in heaven.*<sup>1</sup> A good greeting, nay, the best of all, yet difficult—I do not mean to understand, but—to live up to fully; for it bids us rejoice in those tribulations. It was a rule observed along with the other apostles by James, who saith: *Count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience, and patience hath a perfect work.*<sup>2</sup> Verily, it is a difficult thing to rejoice with tranquillity, and to count it all joy in the midst of divers temptations. It is easy to quote and expound the words, but difficult to carry them out when that most patient and brave Soldier, although He knew He would rise again on the third day and overcome His foes by His death and redeem the elect from damnation, was yet after the last supper troubled in spirit, and said: *My soul is sorrowful even unto death.*<sup>3</sup> Of Whom the gospel saith that He began to fear and to be heavy and sad; nay, being in an agony He was strengthened by an angel, and *his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground.*<sup>4</sup> Yet He, though thus troubled, said to His faithful ones: *Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid; let it not be troubled*<sup>5</sup> because of my short absence *nor let it be afraid* of the cruelty of them that rage; for you will have Me for ever, and will overcome the cruelty of them that rage. Therefore, the soldiers of Christ looking to their leader, the

<sup>1</sup> Luke vi. 22, 23.<sup>2</sup> Jas. i. 2-3<sup>3</sup> Mark xiv. 34.<sup>4</sup> Luke xxii. 43, 44.<sup>5</sup> John xiv. 27.



King of glory, fought a great fight. They passed through fire and water, yet were saved alive, and received from the Lord God the crown of life, of which James in the canonical epistle saith: *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him.*<sup>1</sup> That crown, I verily trust, the Lord will make me to share along with you also, warm-hearted zealots for the truth, and with all who steadfastly love the Lord Jesus, Who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. It behoved Him to suffer, as He Himself saith; and it behoves us to suffer, that the members may suffer with the Head, Who saith: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*<sup>2</sup>

O loving Christ,<sup>3</sup> draw me, a weakling, after Thyself; for if Thou drawest me not, I cannot follow Thee. Grant me a brave spirit that it may be ready. If the flesh is weak, let Thy grace prevent, come in the middle, and follow; for without Thee I can do nothing, and, especially, for Thy sake I cannot go to a cruel death. Grant me a ready spirit, a fearless heart, a right faith, a firm hope, and a perfect love, that for Thy sake I may lay down my life with patience and joy. Amen.

Written in prison in chains on the eve of St. John Baptist, who was beheaded in prison and in chains, because he reproved iniquity; may it please him to pray for me unto the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Jas. i. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt, xvi, 24.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 250.

LXXIV. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS<sup>1</sup>

(June 24, 1415)

Master John Hus, a servant of God in hope, to all the faithful who love and will love God and His law, praying that they may dwell in the truth, grow in the divine grace, and bravely persevere even unto death.

Beloved, I exhort you not to be terrified, neither shaken with fear, because they (my enemies) have ordered my books to be burnt. Remember that the prophecies of the holy Jeremiah, which he wrote at God's command, were burnt, and yet the Jews did not escape the fate he had foretold; for after that they had been burnt, God bade him write the same words, and add to them besides many like words. Which he did: for he dictated them as he lay in prison, and the holy Baruch, who was his scribe, wrote them in a book. You will find it written in Jeremiah the 35th or 45th chapter.<sup>2</sup> In the books of the Maccabees also it is written that sacred writings were burnt, and those who had them in their possession suffered torture.<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, in the times of the New Testament, holy men were burnt, together with the books of God's law. Cardinals, moreover, condemned and burnt the books of St. Gregory entitled the *Morals*, and would have destroyed them all had not God preserved them by means of Gregory's only loyal disciple, Peter.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The letter is in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> Mladenowic has added in the margin: "Hus has no book; the reference is Jer. xxxvi."

<sup>3</sup> 2 Macc. vii.

<sup>4</sup> For this tale see John the Deacon's *Life of Gregory* (iv. c. 69; in *Migne*, vol. xxv.), from whom it was taken by Platina (see his *Life of*

St. John Chrysostom was condemned on the charge of heresy by two Councils,<sup>1</sup> but God in His mercy after St. John's death revealed their falsehood.<sup>2</sup> Keep these examples before you, that you may not under stress of fear give up reading what I have written and hand over your books to be burnt by them. Remember what the merciful Saviour said to us by way of warning in Matt. xxiv., that before the Judgment Day *shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect: but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened.*<sup>3</sup> Holding these things in your memory, beloved, press bravely on; for I trust God that the school of Antichrist shall tremble before you and suffer you to enjoy quietness, and that the Council of Constance shall not come to Bohemia, for methinks many members of the Council will die before they wrest the books from your hands, and they will be scattered abroad from that Council over the earth, like storks; and when winter comes they will discover what they achieved in the summer.<sup>4</sup> Ponder the fact that they condemned their own head on the charge of heresy. Come now, make reply, ye preachers who proclaim

Sabinianus) and adopted by Milman (ii. 310). There is no mention of it in the earliest Life of Gregory (by a monk of Whitby), and it is rightly rejected, so I take it, by Gregorovius (ii. 94). But Hus has changed the tale for his own purposes; it was not the 'cardinals' but the 'people' who tried to burn the books.

<sup>1</sup> The Synods of "the Oaks" and Constantinople.

<sup>2</sup> In 438, thirty-three years after his death in exile, the remains of the martyr were brought back to Constantinople.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 21-4.

<sup>4</sup> Hus's views of the effects of his death on Bohemia were fully fulfilled.



that the Pope is God on earth and cannot sin or be guilty of sinning (as the Canonists assert);<sup>1</sup> that the Pope is the head of the Holy Church Universal, ruling it with an all-sufficient power: is the heart of the Church, giving to it spiritual life: is the fountain from which all power and goodness permeates: is the sun of the Holy Church, and the unfailing refuge to which every Christian should flee. But lo! your head is now cut off, God on earth is bound, his sins are openly declared, the fountain has run dry, the sun is darkened, the heart is torn out, the refuge is a fugitive from Constance and is rejected, so that none can flee to him!<sup>2</sup> The Council condemned him for heresy because he sold indulgences, bishoprics, and benefices; and he was condemned by these very men, many of whom bought these things from him, while others did good trade by selling them over again. John, Bishop of Leitomischl,<sup>3</sup> was there, who twice attempted to buy the see of Prague, but he was outbid by others. Oh! why have they not first cast the beam out of their own eye? Indeed, their own law hath the provision: *Whoso hath gained an office by money, let him be deprived of it.*<sup>4</sup> Therefore, let seller and buyer and money-lender and broker be condemned

<sup>1</sup> Most definitely asserted in Augustin Trionfo of Ancona, *De Potestate Ecclesiastica*, dedicated to John XXII., and in Alvaro Pelayo's *De Planctu Ecclesie* (1332). But Hus, who was no canonist, was probably thinking of Palecz and Stanislaus (see p. 123). Niem (*De Schismate*, ed. Erler, p. 178) tells us that at this time it was publicly debated whether the Pope could not without simony sell benefices. Compare also Albert Engelschalk of Prague, *Aureum Speculum Papæ* (in Brown's edition of Ortiun Gratius's *Fasciculus*, ii. 63-101).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 203, 244.

<sup>3</sup> P. 83.

<sup>4</sup> See Gratian, II. C. 1, q. 1, c. 3, where, however, it is wrongly ascribed.

before the world! St. Peter condemned and uttered a curse on Simon, because he had desired to purchase the virtue of the Holy Ghost with money.<sup>1</sup> These men have condemned and uttered a curse on the seller, while the buyers and money-lenders get off scot-free and carry on their sales privately. There is the Bishop of Constance,<sup>2</sup> who buys, and the other person who has sold to him; and the Pope received money for absolving them! The same thing happens, as I know, in Bohemia and Moravia. Would that the Lord Jesus had said in the Council, 'He that is without the sin of simony, let him condemn Pope John'! Methinks they would have all gone out of doors one after another!<sup>3</sup> Why did they adore him with bended knees, kiss his feet, and call him most holy Father, when they knew he was a 'heretic, a homicide, and a Sodomite,'<sup>4</sup> all of which sins afterwards came to light? Why did the Cardinals elect him as Pope, when they knew he was so shameful a homicide as to have slain the most holy Father?<sup>5</sup> Why did they suffer him to practise simony while performing the duties of a pope, when they were appointed his advisers for the purpose of giving him good counsel? Are not those to blame who themselves as well as he practised simony? Before he escaped from Constance, why had no one the courage to address him except as the most holy Father?<sup>6</sup> To be sure, they were afraid of him then; but when the secular power

<sup>1</sup> Acts ix. 20.

<sup>2</sup> P. 162, *n.*

<sup>3</sup> John viii. 7-9.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p.130, *n.* 1, and p. 243, *n.* 3.

<sup>5</sup> John was commonly accused of having poisoned Alexander V.; but the charge was not in the final official articles (Hardt, iv. 296 ff.).

<sup>6</sup> Hus would not hear in prison of the famous retort of Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury: 'I ask that Pope John act worthily of his office' (Hardt, iv. 1418).

seized him, by God's permission or will, they at once conspired not to let him go free. Surely *now* the wickedness, iniquity, and baseness of Antichrist has been revealed in the Pope and his associates in the Council: *now* the faithful servants of God can understand the meaning of the Saviour's words, *When ye shall see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, . . . he that readeth, let him understand.*<sup>1</sup> Verily "a great abomination" is pride, avarice, and simony: "in a place apart"<sup>2</sup>—that is, dignity which lacks modesty, love, and other virtues; and this is what we clearly mark in those who win office and dignity. Would that I were allowed to point out their wickedness, in order that the faithful servants of God might beware of them! Gladly would I do so; but I am trusting that God will raise up others after me, braver men than there are to-day, who shall better reveal the wickedness of Antichrist<sup>3</sup> and lay down their lives for the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will grant eternal joy both to you and to me. Amen. I write this letter in prison, on the day of St. John Baptist, as I lie bound in chains, remembering that St. John also was beheaded in prison for the sake of God's truth.

The following letter may be confidently dated on June 24 or 25, for at the close of the letter Hus refers to an intended expedition of Sigismund. The heat at Constance this June was so great that on June 22, according to Dacher (in Hardt), Sigismund left the city and encamped in a neighbouring field, transacting business in the open air. Two days later he rode with his court

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *In loco deserto*. Hus is quoting from memory.

<sup>3</sup> For the supposed prophecies of Hus concerning Luther, see my *Age of Hus*, App. R



to Ueberlingen (June 25), returning on the 28th I am inclined to think that it is to this incident that Hus refers.<sup>1</sup>

The Reformer meanwhile, in his sweltering cell, prepared for the end. He requested a confessor, and desired Palecz. Face to face with death the hearts of both men softened. For some reason or other the request was refused, and a monk shrived him. According to Hus, this priest abstained from exacting formal proofs of penitence—*i.e.*, in this case a confession of his heresy. Hus was so little acquainted with the methods of the Inquisition that he gives no indication in his letter of understanding how great an act of clemency, or neglect, was involved in a course so contrary to all the rules of the Inquisition. The letter is also interesting from its illustrations of the casuistry employed to induce Hus to recant or appear to recant. But the purpose of Hus was constant, and his remaining letters are in reality conscious farewells to his different circles of friends.

#### LXXV. TO HIS BOHEMIAN FRIENDS

(Without date : June 24 or 25, 1415)

I have been interviewed by many exhorters. They have pleaded at great length that I ought to abjure, and can do so lawfully by submitting my will to the Holy Church, which is represented by the Holy Council. But not one of them can satisfactorily meet the objection, when I put him in my own position, 'How can a man consistently abjure when he hath never preached, held, or stated the heresy whereof he is charged, and how would he save his conscience if he is not by abjuring to admit that he held the heresy wrongly?' Some said that to abjure did not carry with it this meaning, but only amounted to a renunciation of heresy, whether held or not;

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that Hardt (iv. 344) dates the confessor incident as taking place on June 30, and this letter as the last of all. But this is an inference only, and is hardly possible. If correct, the journey of Sigismund would be his expedition to Perpignan (*infra*, p. 275).

others that it merely meant a denial of the charges, whether they be true or false. My answer was, "Very well, I will swear that I never preached, held, or stated the errors whereof I am charged, and I never will preach, hold, or state them." And at once they hark back to the old advice. Some argue that a man who submits himself to the Church wins merit by his humility when he confesses to guilt, though it be granted that he is innocent. In support of this argument one man brought forward the case of a saint in *The Lives of the Fathers*<sup>1</sup> by whose bed some persons had placed a certain book. When admonished for the offence, he denied it, being holy and blameless. They then said, "You stole it, and hid it in your bed." The book was discovered there, and he at once admitted his guilt. Another man proved his point by the case of a nun, who, wearing male attire, lived in a cloister, and who was charged with having begotten a son by a certain woman. She allowed 'Yes' to go, and kept the boy; but it afterwards came out that she was an innocent woman. Many other cases were brought forward. An Englishman said, 'If I were in your place, I would abjure at the bidding of my conscience; for in England all the doctors—very good men, too—who have been suspected of holding Wyclif's views abjure in a formula set them by order of the archbishop.'<sup>2</sup>

Finally, they came yesterday to the old position that I should hand myself over entirely to the grace of the Council. Palecz came at my request. I

<sup>1</sup> *Vitæ Patrum*, ed. Rosweyd in Migne lxxiii. 191.

<sup>2</sup> The Englishman was right. The leading Lollards at one time or another had all recanted, and forms of abjuration abound, which are a source of trouble to the historian. See my *Age of Wyclif*, p. 266, n. 1.

wanted to confess to him. I asked the commissioners, or rather my exhorters, to give me him or another confessor. I said, "Palecz is my chief opponent; I want to confess to him, or else you can give me another suitable man. For God's sake oblige me." They did so, and I confessed to a doctor—a monk—who listened to me in a gracious and right beautiful spirit. He absolved me, and gave me advice, but did not enjoin on me what the others advised.<sup>1</sup>

Palecz came and shed tears along with me, when I begged him to forgive me for any hard words I had used against him, and, in particular, for having called him in writing a fiction-monger.<sup>2</sup> I also told him that he was the *slédnik*<sup>3</sup> of the whole business, and he did not deny it; also how in a public hearing he had risen to his feet when I denied the articles of the witnesses, and said, "This fellow hath no fear of God." This he denied; but he certainly said it. Perhaps you heard him. I reminded him too of what he said in prison before the commissioners:<sup>4</sup> "Since the birth of Christ no heretic hath written more dangerous teaching against the Church, with the exception of Wyclif, than yourself—I mean you, John Hus." He also said, "All who have been here to talk with him have been infected with that error concerning the sacrament of the altar." He denied it, saying, "I did not say "All," but "Many." But he certainly used these words. And then I rebuked him, saying, "Oh, sir, what a grievous wrong you do me in calling all my hearers heretics!" Afterwards he pleaded with me in the same way as the others.

<sup>1</sup> See comment on p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Fictor*, as often in his *Responsio ad Palecz*, *Mon.* i. 255 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Arch-detective, chief spy.

<sup>4</sup> P. 174.



He is always harping on the great harm that had been done by me and my friends. He told me also that they had a letter addressed to Bohemia containing the news that I had composed while at Gottlieben,<sup>1</sup> two verses about my chains to the tune "Buoh Wsemohúci."<sup>2</sup>

For God's sake look after the letters. Do not give them to any clerk<sup>3</sup> to carry. Let me have a hint if the nobles are to ride with Sigismund.<sup>4</sup> In His mercy Christ Jesus ever keeps me to my former resolve.

#### LXXVI. TO THE FAITHFUL BOHEMIANS<sup>5</sup>

(June 26, 1415)

Master John Hus, a servant of God in hope, to all the faithful Bohemians who love and will love God, sendeth his earnest desires and unprofitable prayers that they may both live and die in the grace of God and dwell with God for ever.

Faithful and beloved in God! this likewise I have determined to write that you may know that the Council—proud, avaricious, and defiled with every crime—hath condemned my Czech books, which it hath never either seen nor heard read, and if it had listened with all its power, would never have understood (for there were present at the Council Frenchmen, Italians, Britons,<sup>6</sup> Spaniards, Germans, and other people of different nationalities), unless perchance John Bishop of Leitomischl might have understood

<sup>1</sup> *In castro.*

<sup>2</sup> "God omnipotent." The poem seems lost. Whether the tune still exists I cannot say. See also p. 15 for Hus and his songs.

<sup>3</sup> *Nulli clerico.*

<sup>4</sup> See p. 259, *n.*

<sup>5</sup> This letter is in Czech.

<sup>6</sup> *Britanni.* There were some Scots present, but whether Hus knew this and deliberately used the word is at least doubtful.

them; he was there with other Bohemian malignants, as well as the Chapters of Prague and the Wyschehrad,<sup>1</sup> from which have proceeded the insults heaped upon God's truth and upon our fatherland, Bohemia. Yet, placing my trust in God, I judge it to be a land of the purest faith, as I bethink me of its zeal for the divine word and for morality. I would that ye might see this Council, which is called the Most Holy Council, and incapable of error; in sooth you would gaze on a scene of foulness;<sup>2</sup> for it is a common proverb among the Swiss,<sup>3</sup> that a generation will not suffice to cleanse Constance from the sins which the Council have committed in that city; they have said, moreover, that the Council was an offence to the world, albeit others rejected it with loathing at the mere sight of its foul deeds. I tell you that as soon as I took my stand in the Council and saw there was no proper discipline there, I shouted out with a loud voice, amid general silence, "I thought there would be more reverence, piety, and discipline in this Council."<sup>4</sup> Then the presiding Cardinal<sup>5</sup> said, "What do you say? You spoke more humbly in the castle."<sup>6</sup> "Yes," I replied, "because there was no one there to shout me down; but here every one is crying out." Therefore since the Council, owing to its irregular proceedings, hath done more harm than good,

<sup>1</sup> The Wyschehrad, or original citadel of Prague, was practically a separate city with walls of its own (destroyed during the Hussite wars). In the time of Hus there was a great monastery there.

<sup>2</sup> For curious details of the public women attracted to Constance by the Council—of whom Dacher counted up over seven hundred—see Hardt, v. 50-52.

<sup>3</sup> *Suabis*. German Switzerland was a part of High Suabia. Another reading is *Suevis*.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 216, 218.   <sup>5</sup> P. 216, n. 1.   <sup>6</sup> Gottlieben; see pp. 216, 204.

therefore, beloved of God, be not terrified by their verdict, which (I trust God) will do themselves no good. They will be scattered abroad like butterflies, and their decree will last as long as spiders' webs. As for myself, they have striven to frighten me, but they could not overcome God's power within me. They would not contend against me with the Scriptures, as those noble lords heard, who took a brave stand on the side of God's truth, and were ready to suffer every shame, Bohemians, Moravians, and Poles, especially Baron Wenzel de Duba and Baron John of Chlum, for the latter were standing near. Sigismund brought them into the Council, and they heard me say, "If I have written anything wrong, I wish to be told of it." Whereupon the presiding Cardinal said, "As you want information, take this: you should retract and obey the decision of fifty doctors of the church." A wonderful piece of information! The virgin St. Catherine ought to have renounced the truth and faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, because fifty philosophers opposed her; but the beloved virgin was faithful even unto death, and won the masters to God, which I as a sinner cannot do.<sup>1</sup> I am writing this to you that you may know that they did not get the better of me by any scripture passage or any arguments; but strove to do so by means of guile and threats so as to induce me to recant and abjure. But God in His mercy, Whose

<sup>1</sup> Catherine of Alexandria at the age of eighteen, so the story ran, had obtained the highest place 'in liberal arts.' The Emperor Maximin promised great rewards to any philosopher who should win her back to heathenism. But she overcame them all. She was then broken on a "Catherine's wheel," and her body transported by angels to Mount Sinai. See Breviary for November 25, whence Hus would obtain his allusion.



gospel I have spread abroad, *was* with me and *is* still; yea, and will be, I trust, to life's end, and will keep me in His grace unto death. I write this on Wednesday after the Feast of St. John Baptist in prison, bound in chains and awaiting death. Yet by virtue of God's hidden counsels I dare not say this in my last letter; for even now Almighty God can set me free.

The reference in the following letter to Jerome, and Hus's comparison of his own weakness with Jerome's strength, is interesting for many reasons. As often happens, the apparently stronger man proved the weaker. For Jerome lacked the moral conviction which made Hus a martyr. The strain of his sickness and imprisonment told also fatally upon the restless knight-errant. He grew fitful—'now wishful to stand fast in his obstinacy, now desirous to be wholly convicted'—as we learn from an anonymous writer present at Constance (*Doc.* 596). The result was that on September 11 he read a paper before the Council, recanting his errors, and adding his 'approval of the condemnation of both Wyclif and Hus.' Fortunately Hus was not spared to receive this stab from his old friend.

The after career of Jerome must be briefly told. He retracted his recantation, and after a defence of his creed before the Council which charmed by its eloquence the fastidious taste of Poggio Bracciolini, was condemned and burnt (May 30, 1416). So in spite of lapse, Jerome and Hus were again one; in their death they were not divided (see *Age of Hus*, pp. 333-44).

### LXXVII. TO THE SAME

(June 27, 1415)

God be with you! I had many reasons for suspecting that I was to die on the morrow after sending you my last letter. But I hear that my death is put off, so I am writing to you once more, kind and faithful friends in God, to assure you of my gratitude as long as I have opportunity. I always find it a

solace to be able to converse with you by letter, and I tell you God knows why He delays my death and that of my dear brother, Master Jerome, who, I trust, will die holy and blameless and be of a braver spirit in meeting pain than I, a weak-kneed sinner. God hath granted us a long time that we may the better recall our sins and be able to do fitting penance for them. He hath granted us time that a continuous and great trial may destroy great sins and bring us comfort. He hath granted us time that we may remember the foul shame of our King, the merciful Lord Jesus, and meditate on His cruel death, and so bear our sufferings with the greater patience; and, besides this, that we may not suppose that we pass from a banquet in this world to one in the next, but may remember how the saints went through many pains before they entered in the heavenly kingdom. Some were cut in pieces, others impaled, others boiled, others roasted, others flayed alive, buried alive, stoned, crucified, crushed between millstones, drawn in opposite directions, drowned, burnt, suffocated by gags, torn asunder into pieces, and before death shamefully entreated and tortured with imprisonment, stripes, and chains. And who can recount all the sufferings which the saints in Old and New Testament times endured for the truth of God; but especially those who rebuked the wickedness of of priests and preached against them? It will be strange if any one now escapes punishment who shall bravely resist wickedness—in particular of the priests—which doth not suffer itself to be rebuked. But I rejoice that they were compelled to read my books, in which their wickedness was revealed. I

know that they have perused these books more carefully than the Holy Scriptures in their desire to discover my errors.

Sent off on Thursday evening before St. Peter's Eve. Amen.

The following farewell to his old University is remarkable for its close approximation to the position of Luther at Worms, and of Wyclif before him. At one time, as we have seen, Hus had been willing to trust the Council, provided the false charges were withdrawn (see p. 224). He had thence advanced to a belief in the general rottenness and untrustworthiness of the Council, as shown by its treatment of John, and its moral chaos (pp. 216, 218, 257, 263). He now demands that his arguments shall be overthrown by Scripture. Hus's optimism as to the victory of the truth is emphatic. He sings with unflinching note :

Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,  
The eternal years of God are hers.

### LXXVIII. TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PRAGUE

(June 27, 1415)

Worshipful masters, bachelors, and students of the University of Prague, dearly beloved in Christ Jesus! I exhort you in the name of the blessed Jesus to love one another, to root out schisms and to promote the honour of God before all things. Remember how I always sought to make the welfare of the University conduce to the honour of God, how I grieved over your disputes and secessions,<sup>1</sup> and how I desired to unite together our glorious country; and lo! it hath turned with exceeding bitterness against me, as you see in the case of some of

<sup>1</sup> *Excessibus*. The German secession to Leipzig had been laid, not unjustly, at his door (see p. 18). But perhaps the word should be translated "excesses" by an extension of classical use.



my dearest friends for whom I would have laid down my life ; and it hath inflicted on me calumnies, curses, and finally an untimely death. Almighty God, *forgive them, for they know not what they do* ;<sup>1</sup> with all sincerity I pray that He may spare them. Moreover, dearly beloved in Christ Jesus, stand in the truth whereof you have knowledge ; for it wins its way before all else and waxes strong even for evermore. Let me tell you I have not recanted nor abjured a single article. The Council desired me to declare the falsity of all of my books and each article taken from them. I refused to do so, unless they should be proved false by Scripture. I mean that whatever false interpretation should be found in any article whatever, I abhor it, and commend it to the correction of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who knows my real intention and will not interpret in a wrong sense which I do not intend. I exhort you in the Lord to abhor any false meaning you may be able to discover in any of these articles, but always to preserve the truth that is intended.

I, Master John Hus, in chains and in prison, now standing on the shore of this present life and expecting on the morrow a dreadful death, which will, I hope, purge away my sins, find no heresy in myself, and accept with all my heart any truth whatsoever that is worthy of belief.

Written on Thursday before St. Peter's Eve.

I pray you to love the Bethlehem and put Gallus<sup>2</sup> in my place ; for I trust that the Lord is with him. Amen. I commend to you Peter Mladenowic, my faithful and loyal comforter and supporter.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiii. 34.

<sup>2</sup> For Gallus (Hawlik) and his difficulties, see p. 248.

The following letter, with its bitter sarcasms on Sigismund's faith, is rightly sent to Duba and Chlum, the officials originally deputed by Sigismund to protect Hus, and see to the carrying out of the safe-conduct. We had already learned that Chlum had left the court (p. 243). We now see that in reality he had been dismissed. His plain speech was not welcome to the faithless monarch.

The letter is without date, and possibly should be put earlier in the month. The reference to Veit as well as to Sigismund's advice at the Council would lead us to this. But if it be dated, with Palacký, at the close of the month, the reader will note that up to the very end, though firm in the day, Hus had severe struggles with himself when chained alone at night in the darkness of his cell.

LXXIX. TO BARONS WENZEL DE DUBA AND JOHN  
OF CHLUM

(Undated: ? middle or end of June)

Most gracious benefactors and guardians of the truth, I exhort you by the tender mercies of Jesus Christ to lay aside at once the vanities of this world and fight for the eternal King, even Christ the Lord. *Put not your trust in princes, in the sons of men, in whom is no safety,*<sup>1</sup> for to-day the sons of men are liars and deceivers, and to-morrow they will perish; but God abideth for ever. He hath servants not because He is in need of them, but for their own welfare. What He promises to them, He holds to; what He pledges himself to grant, He fulfils; He deceives no man by a safe-conduct and dismisses no faithful servant; for He saith: *Where I am, there shall My servant be also.*<sup>2</sup> Each of His servants He, their Master, maketh to be master of all that He hath,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxlv. 3.

<sup>2</sup> John xii. 26.

giving to that servant Himself, and with Himself all things so that he may possess all things without weariness or fear, nay, without any lack, and may rejoice with all the saints in unending joy. *Oh, blessed is that servant whom his master when he cometh, findeth watching!*<sup>1</sup> Serve then, dear lords, with fear this King Who will, I trust, bring you now to Bohemia by His grace in good health, and afterwards to the everlasting life of glory. Farewell!

Methinks this is my last letter to you, for tomorrow I suppose I shall be cleansed from my sins in hope of Jesus Christ by a dreadful death. I cannot write of what I passed through last night. Sigismund hath acted deceitfully throughout. God spare him, and that only for your sakes; you yourselves heard the advice which he gave.<sup>2</sup> I beg you to have no suspicion of the faithful Veit.<sup>3</sup>

On June 29th Hus wrote his last letters of farewell—three in number—to his dearest friends. There is in them no trace of struggle, only the peace of God. Hus had entered already the

Porte after stormie seas.

#### LXXX. TO JOHN OF CHLUM

(June 29, 1415)

Most gracious benefactor, dearly beloved in Christ Jesus, I rejoice without measure that I can still, by the grace of God, write to your grace. I gathered from yesterday's letter,<sup>4</sup> firstly, how the iniquity of the *great harlot*—that is, of the blaspheming congregation, of which we read in the Apocalypse—is and

<sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 43.

<sup>3</sup> P. 225.

<sup>2</sup> At the Council; see p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> A letter from Chlum now lost.



shall be made bare, with which harlot *the kings of the earth commit fornication.*<sup>1</sup> In the same place, likewise, it is written that they commit fornication spiritually, that they depart from Christ and His truth and consent to the falsehood of Antichrist, whether by being seduced or terrified, or by being led to hope in the confederacy for the winning of the world's honour. Secondly, I gathered from the letter how that already the enemies of the truth are beginning to be troubled. Thirdly, I gathered the news of your grace's fervent loyalty, whereby you boldly profess the truth, knowing the baseness of the great harlot. Fourthly, I rejoice to gather that you now desire to put an end to the vanities of this world and to its toilsome service and to fight for Jesus Christ at home. To serve Christ is to reign with Him, as Gregory saith: He that faithfully serves Him will have Christ in the fatherland of heaven as his minister. Christ Himself saith: *Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Amen. I say unto you, that he will rise and gird himself, and will minister to him.*<sup>2</sup> The kings of this world do not act thus with their servants. They only care for them so long as they are useful and necessary to them. Not so Christ, the King of glory, Who hath to-day<sup>3</sup> crowned the apostles Peter and Paul—Peter by crucifixion, Paul by beheading—and welcomed them into the kingdom of the heavenly fatherland. Peter was four times imprisoned and was led forth by an angel. Paul was *thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, twice suffered shipwreck,*<sup>4</sup> for two years bound with chains and in divers ways afflicted; who saith in his epistle:

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii. 2; xviii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii. 37.

<sup>3</sup> It was their feast day.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 25.

*We were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life.*<sup>1</sup> They have now passed their trials and torments, and there remaineth for them infinite bliss and the life of quietness that knows no suffering. Now Peter and Paul reign with the King above, now they are with the choirs of angels, now they see the King in His beauty, now are they released from weariness and are full of bliss unspeakable. May those glorious martyrs, thus united with the King of glory, deign to intercede for us, that, strengthened by their help, we may be partakers in their glory, by patiently suffering whatever God Almighty shall ordain in this world for our greater good. Amen.

I beg you for God's sake still keep on writing, if you can. I ask especially that greetings be conveyed to her Majesty the Queen,<sup>2</sup> and that she be counselled to be loyal to the truth and not offended in me, as though I were a heretic. Convey my greetings to your wife also, whom I beg you to love in Christ Jesus; for I trust she is a daughter of God through her obedience to His commands. Greet all the friends of the truth for God's sake.

### LXXXI. TO WENZEL DE DUBA

(June 29, 1415)

I am delighted to hear that Baron Wenzel intends to marry and flee the vanities of the world. And indeed it is a high time, for he hath for a long time ridden to and fro through the countries, broken lances, wearied his body, spent his money, and hurt

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. i. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Sophia.

his soul. It now, therefore, remains for him to throw these things aside and serve God quietly at home with his wife, and have servants of his own. It will be better<sup>1</sup> to serve God at home and enjoy a happy life without sin and toil, waited on by others, than to be burdened oftentimes with heavy and grievous toils, to run risks of losing his life, and to watch the movements of others. Let this advice be repeated and brought home to one who hath done me so many kindnesses. God is still upholding the life of Hus by His might; yea, and will uphold it so long as He wills, against the proud, greedy, and in divers ways unconscionable Council, wherein the Lord knoweth them that are His.

Sent off on the day of SS. Peter and Paul, at the time of the evening meal.<sup>2</sup>

### LXXXII. TO HIS FRIENDS IN BOHEMIA<sup>3</sup>

(June 29, 1415)

God be with you! May it please Him to bestow upon you the eternal reward for the many kindnesses you have shown me, and still do show, although perhaps in the body I am already dead. Do not suffer Baron John of Chlum, faithful, steadfast knight that he is and my kind benefactor, to run any risk. I pray this for God's sake, dear Master Peter, Superintendent of the Mint, and Mistress Anna!<sup>4</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the letter, save the date, is in Czech.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad cœnam*: the day at Constance would end at about 7.30 at this time, and the 'cœna' be at six at the latest.

<sup>3</sup> The letter is in Czech, with the exception of the sentence to Peter and the superscription.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 211, n. 4.



entreat you also to live a good life and obey God, as I have often told you. Give thanks in my name to my gracious mistress the Queen for all the kindnesses she hath conferred on me. Greet your family and the other faithful friends, whose names I may not mention. I entreat you all to pray to God in my behalf; by His help we shall soon meet together in His gracious and holy presence. Amen. I write this in prison in fetters, which I am wearing, I trust, for the gospel of God, expecting every moment the sentence of death. For God's sake, I pray you suffer not good priests to be oppressed.

MASTER HUS,  
in hope a servant of God.

Peter,<sup>1</sup> dearest friend, keep my fur cloak in memory of me.

Lord Henry Lefl,<sup>2</sup> live a good life with thy wife. My thanks to thee! God be thy reward!

Faithful friend, Master Lideři and Mistress Margaret, Masters Skuoček and Mikeška<sup>3</sup> and others: may God grant you an eternal reward for your toils and the other kindness you have conferred on me.

Master Christian,<sup>4</sup> faithful and beloved, God be with thee!

Master Martin,<sup>5</sup> my disciple, remember those things which I taught thee.

Master Nicolas<sup>6</sup> and Peter, the Queen's chaplain, and the other masters and priests, be diligent students of God's word.

<sup>1</sup> Mladenowic.

<sup>2</sup> P. 151, last paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> The son-in-law of Wenzel the pitch-maker, whose house from 1401 onwards had been a notable gathering-place of reformers (see *Doc.* 175).

<sup>4</sup> Prachaticz.

<sup>5</sup> P. 149.

<sup>6</sup> Pp. 80, 236.

Priest Gallus,<sup>1</sup> preach the word of God.

Finally, I entreat you all to persevere in the truth of God.

On the feast day of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, about the time of the evening meal.<sup>2</sup>

The three letters written on June 29 are the last that Hus wrote. The month's grace was evidently fruitless, and Sigismund was in a hurry to depart for Perpignan, there to meet, by agreement, Benedict XIII. and Ferdinand of Aragon, the chief supporter of the Spanish anti-pope, and arrange for the ending of the schism. This journey had twice already been postponed, and admitted of no further delay. For on June 15 the proctor of Gregory XII.—Charles di Malatesta—had arrived in Rome and commenced negotiations for Gregory's abdication. On July 4 all arrangements were completed, and the Council summoned to listen to a bull of Gregory, convoking and then approving the Council and all its doings, and concluding with a proclamation of his own resignation. But before Sigismund could be allowed to depart from Constance the Council were resolute that he should appear as a consenting party to the death of Hus. It was determined, therefore, to bring matters to an issue. On July 1—two days after Hus's last letter, and after Sigismund's return from his short holiday at Ueberlingen—Hus was visited by a deputation of eight prelates, with Hus's gaoler, the Archbishop of Riga, at their head, who endeavoured once more to persuade the Reformer that he could reasonably recant.

Hus replied by writing out with his own hand his final decision.

### HUS'S FINAL DECLARATION

(July 1, 1415)

I, John Hus, in hope a priest of Jesus Christ, fearing to offend God, and fearing to fall into perjury, do hereby profess my unwillingness to abjure all or any of the articles produced against

<sup>1</sup> P. 236 n.

<sup>2</sup> P. 273, n. 2.

me by false witnesses. For God is my witness that I neither preached, affirmed, nor defended them, though they say that I did. Moreover, concerning the articles that they have extracted from my books, I say that I detest any false interpretation which any of them bears. But inasmuch as I fear to offend against the truth, or to gainsay the opinion of the doctors of the Church, I cannot abjure any one of them. And if it were possible that my voice could now reach the whole world, as at the Day of Judgment every lie and every sin that I have committed will be made manifest, then would I gladly abjure before all the world every falsehood and error which I either had thought of saying or actually said. I say I write this of my own free will and choice.

Written with my own hand, on the first day of July.<sup>1</sup>

Four days later the Council made another effort to bring about the desired recantation. A deputation of the leaders of the Council—D'Ailli, Zabarella, Simon Cramaud the Patriarch of Antioch, the Archbishops of Riga and Milan, together with two Englishmen, the illustrious Hallum of Salisbury, and Bubwith, the simoniacal Bishop of Bath, narrowed the issue to the recantation merely of the heresies extracted from articles Hus had recognised as his own. At one time this would have satisfied Hus; but now he refused, and referred them to his declaration of July 1. He dared not cause to stumble those whom he had taught. Later in the day Sigismund, influenced perhaps by some remnants of conscience, made one last effort to save him. He sent Chlum, Wenzel de Duba, and Lacembok, together with four bishops, to ask Hus for his final decision, whether he would persevere or recant. Hus was brought out of his cell to meet this deputation—a sidelight as we take it on his cramped confinement—doubtless wondering whether a new trial of his constancy awaited him in the defection of his dearest friends:

<sup>1</sup> Not in Palacký: from Hardt, iv. 345. I see no reason to doubt its genuineness.



'Master John,' said honest Chlum, 'we are laymen, and cannot advise you. Consider, however, and if you realise that you are guilty concerning any of the charges, do not be ashamed to receive instruction and recant. But if you do not feel guilty, do not force your conscience, nor lie before God, but rather stand fast to the death in the truth which you know.'

Hus replied with tears : 'Sir John, know that if I was conscious that I had written or preached aught against the law, gospel, or Mother Church, I would gladly and humbly recant my errors. God is my witness. But I am anxious now as ever that they will show me Scriptures of greater weight and value than those which I have quoted in writing and teaching. If these shall be shown me, I am prepared and willing to recant.' 'Do you desire to be wiser than the whole Council?' retorted a bishop. 'Than the whole Council, no,' replied Hus ; 'but give me a portion, however small, of the Council to teach me by Scriptures of greater weight and value, and I am ready to recant.' 'He is obstinate in his heresy,' cried the bishops, and retired to make preparation for the final scene.

At six o'clock the next morning Hus was brought to the cathedral. While mass was sung he was kept waiting outside the door ; this over, he was placed in the middle of the aisle on an elevated dais. Around him were placed the various robes needful for celebrating mass. But before taking his stand on this theatre of degradation Hus knelt down and prayed. The whole Council was there, with Sigismund, in his robes and diadem, on the throne. In the sight of all Hus stood alone while the Bishop of Lodi, the customary orator on big occasions, preached 'a short, compendious, and laudable' sermon on the danger of heresy and the duty of destroying it. The events of that day, said the preacher, would win for Sigismund immortal glory. 'O King, a glorious triumph is awaiting you ; to thee is due the everlasting crown and a victory to be sung through all time, for thou hast bound up the bleeding Church, removed a persistent schism, and uprooted the heretics. Do you not see how lasting will be your fame and glory ? For what can be more acceptable to God than to uproot a schism and destroy the errors among the flock.'

But the day was not altogether without its stings for Sigismund. Hus, when he spoke, was not slow to remind him of his safe-conduct. Sigismund, it is said, blushed, an incident

denied by some historians with as much warmth as if the blush were as discreditable to Sigismund as his falsehood.

Then the representatives of the nations read aloud the record of the trial and the sentence of the Council. When Hus attempted to reply and point out certain omitted limitations in his theses, D'Ailli ordered him to be silenced. 'You shall answer all together later.' 'How can I possibly answer all together,' retorted Hus, 'since I cannot keep them all together in my mind.' 'Be silent,' said Zabarella, 'we have heard you quite enough.' 'I beseech you for God's sake hear me,' cried Hus, with clasped hands, 'lest the bystanders believe that I ever held such errors; afterwards do with me as you list.' We need not wonder at his indignation when we remember that one of the articles read out against him was that he had said that he was the fourth member in the Trinity. When the reading of the tissue of falsehood was completed and the sentence pronounced, Hus knelt once more in prayer: 'Lord Jesus, pardon all my enemies for Thy great mercy's sake, I beseech Thee, for Thou knowest that they have falsely accused me. Pardon them for Thy great mercy's sake.' But the bishops who stood near frowned and laughed.

After this he was clad by seven bishops in the full vestments of a celebrant. Once more the bishops urged him to recant. But Hus turned to the people and cried out: 'These bishops here urge me to recant. I fear to do this lest I be a liar in the sight of God, and offend against my conscience and God's truth.' So he stepped down from the table, and the bishops began the ceremony of degradation; one by one his vestments were stripped off him. A dispute arose over his tonsure; should it be cut with scissors or a razor? 'See,' said Hus, turning to Sigismund, 'these bishops cannot even agree in their blasphemy.' A paper crown a yard high, with three demons painted on it 'clawing his soul with their nails,' and the words "Heresiarch," was then fastened on his head. 'The crown which my Redeemer wore,' said Hus, 'was heavier and more painful than this.' 'We commit thy soul to the devil,' sang the priests, as they handed him over to the secular arm. 'But he, with clasped hands and upturned eyes: I commit it to the most gracious Lord Jesus.' By a strange oversight the Council forgot to add the crowning farce of these inquisition courts, the solemn adjuration to the secular arm to shed no blood. 'Go, take him,' said Sigismund, turning to Lewis, Count Palatine, the sword-bearer of the empire, who stood at Sigis-

mund's elbow, holding the golden orb and its cross in his hand. The count handed him over to the magistrates, who stripped him of his gown and hose, and led him out to die, escorted by a thousand armed men.

As he passed through the churchyard of the Cathedral, Hus saw a bonfire of his books. He laughed, and told the bystanders not to believe the lies circulated about him. The whole city was in the streets as Hus passed through their midst. But when the procession reached the gates the crowd found that they were forbidden to pass; there were fears lest the drawbridge should break down with their weight. On arriving about noon at the execution ground, familiarly known as "the Devil's Place," Hus kneeled and prayed 'with a joyful countenance.' The paper crown fell off, and he smiled. 'Put it on again wrong way up,' cried the mob, 'that he may be burnt with the devils he has served.' His hands were tied behind his back, and Hus fastened to the stake which had been driven into the ground over the spot where a dead mule belonging to one of the cardinals had been recently buried. 'Turn him round towards the West,' cried the crowd, 'he is a heretic; he must not face the East.' This done, a sooty pot-hook chain was wound round his neck, and two faggots placed under his feet. Burgher Reichental—the author of the famous illustrated *Diary*—offered to call a priest. 'There is no need,' replied Hus, 'I have no mortal sin.' But a priest 'who was riding about in a vest of very red silk,' was less merciful. 'No confessor must be given him,' he cried, 'for he is a heretic.' For the last time Lewis, Count Palatine, and the Marshal of the Empire, asked him if he would recant and save his life. Said Hus, 'in a loud voice,' 'God is my witness that the evidence given against me is false. I have never thought nor preached save with the one intention of winning men, if possible, from their sins. In the truth of the gospel I have written, taught, and preached to-day I will gladly die.' So they heaped the straw and wood around him, and poured pitch upon it. When the flames were lighted, 'he sang twice, with a loud voice, "Christ, Thou Son of the Living God, have mercy upon me." When he began the third clause, "Who was conceived of the Virgin Mary," the wind blew the flames in his face. So, as he was praying, moving his lips and head, he died in the Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the various accounts of this trial and last scene, see my *Age of Hus*, p. 332.



## 280 FROM THE FRANCISCAN FRIARY

The beadles piled up the fuel, 'two or three cart-loads,' 'stirred the bones with sticks, split up the skull, and flung it back into the flames, together with his coat and shoes,' which the Count Palatine bought from the executioner, for three times the usual fee 'lest the Bohemians should keep them as relics.' When the heart was found they ran a sharp stake through it and set it ablaze. As soon as all was over the ashes were heaped into a barrow, and tilted into the Rhine.

---

*For all thy saints, O Lord,  
Who strove in thee to live,  
Who followed thee, obeyed, adored,  
Our grateful hymn receive.*

*For all thy saints, O Lord,  
Accept our thankful cry,  
Who counted thee their great reward,  
And strove in thee to die.*

MEMORIAL HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH FOR THE  
DEATH-DAY OF JOHN HUS (JULY 6, 1415.)

## APPENDIX A

### A DOUBTFUL LETTER OF HUS

WE have deemed it best, following the example of Palacký, to print the following letter in an Appendix rather than to incorporate it in the main text. The letter itself is not found in any manuscript, nor is it printed in the *Epistolæ Piissimæ*. We are entirely dependent for it upon the Nuremberg edition of 1558 (*Monumenta*, i. 59). It is true that there is also a Czech copy of it, first printed in 1564, but the Czech copy, according to Palacký (*Doc.* 149 *n.*), is a mere translation from the Latin, and is in no sense an original of Hus. But the most suspicious circumstance is the internal evidence. The letter contains an exhortation to communion in both kinds. Now historians are agreed that this was a matter upon which Hus had formed no very definite ideas before his imprisonment at Constance (see *supra*, pp. 170, 177, 248). That clause therefore certainly must be an interpolation. But the rest of the letter is a mere patchwork, which could easily have been compiled from the other letters of Hus.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it is evident from the absence of all allusions that this letter was not written during Hus's stay in Constance, or from his prison. This therefore rules out a later date. The letter seems to us either a pious fraud in the interest of the Calixtine party, or else to be too seriously interpolated for us now to discover the original kernel. Of the two, we incline to the former opinion. But the reader shall judge the matter for himself.

<sup>1</sup> The reader may compare the letter with pp. 149, 275, and other places.

## TO A CERTAIN PRIEST

*(Without date)*

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee!

Brother beloved, be diligent in preaching the gospel and do the work of a good evangelist; neglect not thy calling, and labour as a happy warrior of Christ. First of all, live a godly and holy life; next, let thy teaching be faithful and true; be an example unto others in good works, lest thou be rebuked in a sermon; correct sin and commend well-doing. Unto those who live evil lives, threaten eternal penalties; but to those who are faithful and live godly lives, hold out eternal bliss. Preach unremittingly and yet at no great length, and profitably, with a prudent understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Never make hesitating and doubtful statements, lest thou be rebuked by thine adversaries, who rejoice to disparage their neighbours and hurl insults at God's ministers. Give exhortation to the confession of faith and the communion in either kind of the body and blood of Christ, that those who have truly repented of their sins may the oftener on that account present themselves for communion. Moreover, I urge thee not to meet strangers at taverns, lest thou hold converse with men; for the more a preacher holds aloof from converse with the world, the more acceptable he is. Nevertheless, refuse not such help as thou canst render to others. Preach in season and out of season, so far as in thee lieth, against luxury: for that is the fiercest beast that devoureth man, for whom the man Christ Jesus suffered. Wherefore, brother beloved, I counsel thee to flee fornication: for it will conceal itself, where thou



wouldest do good. By all means flee young women, lest thou put trust in their religious zeal; for St. Augustine saith: "The more religious people are, the more inclined are they to luxury; and under the cloak of religion lurks the craft and poison of fornication." Dearly beloved, know this, that the conversation of such subverteth many who could not be deceived or defiled by the conversation of the world. On no account permit women to enter thy house; nor converse too frequently with them, as it seemeth to be a stumbling-block. Next, whatever thou doest, fear God and keep His commandments; so shalt thou walk uprightly and not perish; thou shalt subdue the flesh, despise the world, vanquish Satan, put on God, find life, confirm others, and crown thyself with a crown of glory, which the Righteous Judge will give thee. Amen.

## APPENDIX B

TABLE OF HARMONY BETWEEN THE NUMBERING OF THE LETTERS  
IN THIS EDITION AND THOSE OF PALACKÝ AND THE NUREM-  
BERG FOLIO; ALSO A TABLE OF THE DATES IN THIS EDITION  
AND PALACHÝ

Number in Palacký.	Number in this Edition.	Date in Palacký.	Date in this Edition.	Pages in the <i>Monumenta</i> (1558 and 1715).
Letter	Letter			
I	I	July 1408	June 30, 1408	not included
II	III	1408 fin.	early Dec. 1408	not included
III	II	s. d.	Sept. 1408 (?)	not included
IV	IV	cc. 1409	late autumn 1408	i. 93b; 117
V	V	cc. 1410	about 1410	i. 100b; 125
VI	VI	1410	Sept. 1410	not included
VII	VII	Jan. 18, 1411	Jan. 18, 1411	not included
VIII	VIII	May 25, 1411	May 25, 1411	i. 94; 119
IX	IX	Sept. 1, 1411	Sept. 1, 1411	not included
X	X	Sept. 1411	early Sept. 1411	i. 92; 117
XI	XI	Dec. 1411	Dec. 1411	not included
XII	XII	1412 s. d.	March 1412	not included
XIII	XIII	June 10, 1412	June 10, 1412	not included
XIV	XIV	1412	summer 1412	not included
XV	XV	1412	Aug. (?) 1412	i. 93; 117
XVI	XVI	Nov. 1412	early Oct. 1412	not included
XVII	XVII	1412	early Oct. 1412	i. 95; 119
XVIII	XVIII	1412	Oct. 1412	i. 99; 124
XIX	XIX	1412	Oct. 1412	i. 97; 121
XX	XX	s. d.	Dec. 1412	i. 98; 123
XXI	XXI	Dec. 1412	Dec. 1412	i. 98; 123
XXII	XXII	Dec. 25, 1412	Dec. 25, 1412	i. 99; 124
XXIII	XXIII	1413	Jan. (?) 1413	i. 98; 122
XXIV	XXIV	1413	Jan. (?) 1413	i. 97; 122

Number in Palacký.	Number in this Edition.	Date in Palacký.	Date in this Edition.	Pages in the <i>Monumenta</i> (1558 and 1715).
Letter	Letter			
XXV	XXV	Feb. 1413	after Feb. 6, 1413	not included
XXVI	XXVI	1413	early 1413	i. 94; 118
XXVII	XXVII	1413	after April 1413	not included
XXVIII	XXVIII	1413	after April 1413	not included
XXIX	XXIX	s. d.	1413	not included
XXX	XXX	1413	end of April 1413	not included
XXXI	XXXI	July 1, 1413	July 1, 1413	not included
XXXII	XXXII	1414	early in 1414	not included
XXXIII	see p. 140	Aug. 26, 1414	Aug. 26, 1414	i. 2
XXXIV	see p. 140, n. 1	Aug. 26, 1414	Aug. 26, 1414	not included
XXXV	see p. 141	Aug. 30, 1414	Aug. 30, 1414	i. 283
XXXVI	XXXIII	Sept. 1, 1414	Sept. 1, 1414	not included
XXXVII	XXXIV	beginning Oct. 1414	Oct. 12, 1414	i. 57; 72
XXXVIII	XXXV	beginning Oct. 1414	early Oct. 1414	i. 57; 72
XXXIX	XXXVI	Oct. 20, 1414	Oct. 20, 1414	i. 57; 73
XL	XXXVII	Nov. 4, 1414	Nov. 4, 1414	i. 58; 74
XLI	XXXVIII	Nov. 6, 1414	Nov. 6, 1414	i. 58; 74
XLII	see p. 162	Nov. 10, 1414	Nov. 10, 1414	i. 58; 73
XLIII	XXXIX	Nov. 16, 1414	Nov. 16, 1414	i. 58; 75
XLIV	XL	Jan. 19, 1415	Jan. 19, 1415	i. 60; 76
XLV	XLI	s. d.	Jan. 1415	i. 72; 91
XLVI	see p. 169	s. d.	Jan. 1, 1415	i. 72; 91
XLVII	XLII	s. d.	Feb. 1415	i. 74; 94
XLVIII	XLIII	s. d.	Feb. 1415	i. 71; 90
XLIX	XLIV	s. d.	Feb. 1415	i. 72; 92
L	XLV	s. d.	Feb. 1415	i. 74; 94
LI	XLVI	s. d.	end of Feb. 1415	i. 72; 91
LII	XLVIII	s. d.	March 4, 1415	i. 71; 90
LIII	see p. 191	s. d.	March 5, 1415	i. 71; 90
LIV	XLIX	s. d.	March 6, 1415	i. 71; 91
LV	see p. 196	March 1415	first week in March 1415	i. 73; 93
LVI	L	s. d.	middle March 1415	i. 73; 93
LVII	XLVII	March 4, 1415	Feb. 28, 1415	i. 73; 93
LVIII	LI	after March 20, 1415	March 21, 1415	i. 75; 95
LIX	LII	March 24, 1415	March 24, 1415	i. 75; 95
LX	LIII	June 1415	morning June 5	i. 69; 88
LXI	LX	June 1415	after June 8	i. 68; 86
LXII	LVI	June 1415	June 6, 1415	i. 66; 84
LXIII	LIV	June 5, 1415	June 5, 1415	i. 69; 88
LXIV	LV	June 6, 1415	June 6, 1415	i. 65; 84
LXV	LVII	June 7, 1415	June 7, 1415	i. 62; 79



Number in Palacký.	Number in this Edition.	Date in Palacký.	Date in this Edition.	Pages in the <i>Movimenta</i> (1568 and 1715).
Letter	Letter			
LXVI	LVIII	June 1415	June 8, 1415	i. 69; 88
LXVII	LIX	June 1415	June 9 or 10, 1415	i. 68; 87
LXVIII	LXI	s. d.	June 9, 1415	not included
LXIX	LXII	June 9, 1415	June 9, 1415	i. 70; 90
LXX	LXIII	after June 8, 1415	after June 8	i. 68; 87
LXXI	LXIV	June 10, 1415	June 10, 1415	i. 60; 76
LXXII	LXV	June 13, 1415	June 13, 1415	i. 65; 83
LXXIII	LXVI	June 16, 1415	June 16, 1415	i. 66; 84
LXXIV	see p. 238	s. d.	middle of June	i. 70; 89
LXXV	LXVII	s. d.	middle of June	i. 70; 89
LXXVI	see p. 240	s. d.	middle of June	i. 70; 89
LXXVII	LXVIII	s. d.	middle of June	i. 70; 90
LXXVIII	LXIX	s. d.	after June 18	i. 63; 81
LXXIX	LXX	June 21, 1415	June 21, 1415	i. 64; 82
LXXX	LXXI	June 21, 1415	June 21, 1415	i. 62; 80
LXXXI	LXXII	s. d.	about June 22	i. 63; 80
LXXXII	LXXIII	June 23, 1415	June 23, 1415	i. 67; 85
LXXXIII	LXXIV	June 24, 1415	June 24, 1415	i. 61; 78
LXXXIV	LXXV	s. d.	June 24 or 25	i. 67; 86
LXXXV	LXXVI	June 26, 1415	June 26, 1415	i. 60; 77
LXXXVI	LXXVII	June 27, 1415	June 27, 1415	i. 62; 79
LXXXVII	LXXVIII	June 27, 1415	June 27, 1415	i. 63; 80
LXXXVIII	LXXIX	s. d.	June 1415 (?)	i. 64; 82
LXXXIX	LXXX	June 29, 1415	June 29, 1415	i. 64; 82
XC	LXXXI	June 29, 1415	June 29, 1415	i. 65; 83
XCI	LXXXII	June 29, 1415	June 29, 1415	i. 65; 83
not in Palacký	Final Declaration, see p. 275	...	July 1st, 1415	...









